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THE HISTORIANS' HISTORY OF THE WORLD

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BON LOUIS HENRI MARTIN

THE HISTORIANS' HISTORY OF THE WORLD . . .

A COMPREHENSIVE NARRATIVE OF THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONS AS RECORDED BY THE GREAT WRITERS OF ALL AGES

EDITED BY HENRY SMITH WILLIAMS, LL.D.

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BOOK II

FRANCE FROM 1715 TO 1815

PERIOD I. THE FALL OF THE OLD RÉGIME. [1715–1789 A.D.]

(Comprising Chapters I–VI)

A PREFATORY CHARACTERISATION OF THE PERIOD

By ALFRED RAMBAUD
Member of the Institute

POLITICAL CONDITIONS[1]

In 1789, before the meeting of the states-general, the absolute monarchy moulded into shape by Richelieu and brought to perfection by Louis XIV was still erect in all the integrity of its power.

The successive struggles sustained by France through nine centuries against the various social forces — struggles that continually changed their face according to the causes from which they sprang, now some obnoxious form of feudalism or church organisation, now some fresh manifestation of energy on the part of the people — tended unswervingly towards a single end. The kings themselves might lose sight of this end, incapable or demented rulers might occupy the throne; but through all revolts and complications, in spite of feudal rebellions and English invasions, the pure doctrine of absolute monarchy was steadfastly preserved. Fierce might be the hate that burned between the Armagnacs and the Burgundians, furious the spirit that gave rise to the *Praguerie* and the league of the public weal, bitter the religious wars, the revolts of the nobles under Louis XIII and the Fronde, which filled young Louis XIV with rancour and ripened him for the rôle of despot he was to play; but after each reverse the monarchy, strong in the devotion of its citizens and peasantry that had been trampled under foot during the preceding combat, rose in renewed might, materially and morally more firmly established than before.

During past centuries it had been obliged to see limits set to its power by rival forces; now it had grown sufficiently robust to break down all opposition. Resolved to accept no counsels, to endure neither contradiction nor remonstrance, the monarchy set itself up before its former adversaries, the nobility, the clergy, the parliament, the bourgeoisie, as an object of wor-

[1] To be consulted: A. de Tocqueville, *L'ancien Régime et la Révolution*. H. Taine, *Les origines de la France contemporaines, L'ancien Régime*. A. Chérest, *La chûte de l'ancien Régime*.

ship, a divinity that would not tolerate atheism. It was not satisfied to be free from the necessity of struggling — it determined to be adored; and the temple of the new religion was that palace of Versailles where the descendants of the noblest families, forgetting their pride, came to beg a favourable glance from the king; where even the "great Condé became a picture of baseness and servility in the presence of the ministers" (Saint-Simon).

There were at court great names that had come down from feudal times, borne by families that were branches of the royal house; Louis XIV admitted no hierarchy among the noble, save that created by his own caprice; the simple gentleman who obtained from him the right to wear the *justaucorps à brevet*, or to hold the candle during the royal process of disrobing was more to be envied than a prince or duke. Peers of the realm indeed there were in plenty under Louis XIV, who sold thousands of patents of nobility toward the close of his reign, and his example was followed all through the eighteenth century.

So absolute was the power of Louis XIV that by the declaration of 1682 he caused to be consecrated by Bossuet a Gallican church, which venerated the pope but rendered obedience to no power save that of the king. Even the Jesuits in France affected Gallicanism, although nothing could be further removed from the principles of their institutions. It is also well known to what length the king went in restricting the right of worship of his subjects, whether they adhered to the Protestant faith, or were Catholics tinged with Jansenism.

Before Louis XIV certain provinces had been called to distinguish them from others, "state provinces," because each was a state within itself, consisting of nobility, clergy, magistracy and bourgeoisie, without whose consent the king had no power to levy taxes. Louis XIV suppressed some of these "state provinces" altogether, and reduced others to submission by the menace of dissolution.

Municipal liberties flourished to a certain extent; but in 1692 the king substituted for magistrates appointed by election others to whom he had sold a hereditary right to sit in judgment on their fellow-citizens. The offices of mayor and sheriff in the north, consul and *capitoul* in the south, were literally knocked down to the highest bidder. Occasionally the monarchy received pay for restoring to office the elected candidates that had been ejected; but in that case the post was immediately put up at auction again. Several times the supreme power descended to this debasing practice, which exposed the full extent of its disloyalty, and revealed at the same time the decadence of that municipal liberty that had attained its brightest glory in the heroic age of France.

The king could make war or peace exactly as he pleased, could pass laws, being himself the "living law," could impose new taxes as he would; for example the *capitation* in 1695, and the *vingtièmes* (twentieths) that followed a short time after. He crushed the people that concessions might be accorded to the *fermiers généraux* and special privileges granted them (salt, liquors, customs-duties, tobacco). He expended the state revenues as though they had been his own personal wealth, looking upon himself as not only the ruler of his subjects but the owner of their property, as indeed he was of their liberty and life by virtue of his arbitrary warrants (*lettres de cachet*) and "exceptional justice." In his *mémoires* Louis XIV wrote: "Kings are absolute masters and as such have a natural right to dispose of everything belonging to their subjects, whether they are members of the church or not."

The character of the kings of France underwent modification; to the proud, unyielding Louis XIV succeeded Louis XV, the indolent, and the easy-tempered Louis XVI; but through all these surface permutations the nature of royalty itself remained unchanged. On his death-bed Louis XIV could still assert: "I am the state"; when Louis XV had occasion to express regret at having given offence to his people he saw fit to close with the words, "Although a king is accountable for his conduct only to God"; and on the eve of the Revolution Louis XVI made reply to certain representations of the duc d'Orléans: "It is legal because I wish it."

Nor was this royal absolutism a mere abstraction; by means of centralisation and an official organisation that was a complete hierarchy in itself the king was able to make his power felt in the remotest corners of his kingdom. Immediately about him were the ministers, chosen from the "low bourgeoisie" (Saint-Simon) that they might be the more completely under control; and in each province was an intendant as omnipotent as the ministers, having under him sub-delegates whom he himself appointed, and who filled a position similar to that of sub-prefect. In cities the municipal authorities either purchased their office direct from the king or, in case they were appointed by election, submitted themselves entirely to the will of his agents. In the rural districts where there were as yet no municipal councils the *syndic* or mayor was chosen by general assembly of the people; but in no case would the general assembly venture to elect another candidate than the one offered by the sub-delegate, nor would the syndic, once in office, dare take a single step unapproved by his redoubtable chief. Indeed there was no end to the annoyances to which cities and villages were alike subjected under such a system of "administrative tutelage." Before a church roof could be repaired or a damaged fountain be restored, before even so insignificant a sum as twenty-five francs could be expended for the public good it was necessary to obtain the authorisation of the intendant of the province. Elevation to municipal authority in villages, that is to the post of syndic or tax-collector, came to be regarded as a calamity by the peasants rather than as a blessing. In 1702 the king conceived the idea of creating in each provincial parish an office of permanent syndic that he might derive profit from its sale to the highest bidder; but so few purchasers presented themselves that it was necessary to return to the system of so-called elections. In this manner the monarch had contrived by means of agents — less numerous than to-day but still present in every part of the realm — sent out from the seat of power, to obliterate all influences handed down from a former age, to substitute his own authority for that of any surviving remnant of the past.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS[1]

It was in the life of the rural populations that the substitution just referred to wrought the most momentous effects.

[1 To be consulted: Arthur Young, *Travels in France* (1787–1789). Rougier de la Bergerie, *Recherches sur les principaux abus qui s'opposent au progrès de l'agriculture* (1788) and *Histoire de l'agriculture française* (1815), *Mémoire publiée par la société de l'agriculture à l'assemblée nationale*. Dareste de la Chavanne, *Histoire des classes agricoles en France*. H. Doniol, *Histoire des classes rurales en France*, and *La Révolution et la Féodalité*. Chassin, *L'Église et les derniers serfs*. Babeau, *Le Village sous l'ancien régime* and *La vie rurale dans l'ancienne France*. Korêief, *Les paysans et la question paysanne en France au XVIII siècle* (in Russian), Moscow, 1789. L'abbé (now cardinal) Mathieu, *L'Ancien régime en Lorraine*, Paris, 1878. Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières en France*, 4 vols., 1867. A. Franklin, *Les corporations ouvrières, et comment on devenait patron*. Babeau, *La ville sous l'ancien régime*, and *Les artisans et les domestiques d'autrefois*.]

One thing must not be forgotten : France was at that time an essentially rural country, and agriculture was the occupation of three-fourths of the population. That the Revolution struck such deep root all over the land was due not so much to the political changes it brought about as to the fact that it modified the social condition of twenty millions of peasants ; it reached far and lasted long because it was above all an agrarian revolution.

According to a document published in 1790 by the national assembly the population of France was divided at that time into two unequal parts ; 20,521,000 inhabitants lived, or rather existed, by agriculture, and 5,709,000 were occupied in industry, commerce, the so-called liberal professions, or the performance of public functions. The agriculturists composed 78.24 per cent. of the whole, as against 21.76 per cent. attributed to the urban classes. A single example will illustrate the relative inferiority of France's industrial population, however real had been the progress made.[1] In 1789 French industries combined did not consume more than 250,000 tons of coal, and in 1815, twenty-six years later, that amount had only been quadrupled.

Given the relatively slow progress of French industry and the limited number of industrial working-people in France, is it to be wondered at that during the revolutionary period there was not, properly speaking, any social question that had labour for its basis? Yet there was a decided agrarian-social question, and this formed the groundwork of the Revolution. It was a question that interested nearly the whole of the population ; some, the nobles, in their capacity of property-owners, others as occupying the land under various titles.

The maxim "No land without a lord" had in the eleventh century become a reality. The *alleu*, or piece of ground owned by an independent proprietor, had almost entirely disappeared, every division of land being the property of some noble who allowed it to be held by a tenant. To the noble belonged the fields and woods, the mountains and rivers; and the *villains*, those at least who were *serfs*, were also his property. Towards the close of the fourteenth century and in the beginning of the fifteenth had occurred that process of evolution which transformed — with a few exceptions that were apparent up to the time of the Revolution — the villain who was a serf into the villain who could call himself a free man. In 1789 there were still serfs in the church (for example, those of the St. Claude chapter in the

[1 At the end of the eighteenth century there were in France six hundred great forges which produced 196 million pounds of cast-iron yearly. In 1742 the factory of Creuzot made a modest start, in 1767 Frédéric Japy founded the great watch-making establishment of Beaucourt, and in 1784 a certain Martin imported from England a machine for spinning flax invented by Arkwright. As was the case everywhere the lower classes at first showed great hostility to the introduction of machines (examples Jacquard, Vaucanson). The weaving industry had already attained a certain development; St. Quentin, in the manufacture of fine cloths, employed 60,000 spinners, 6,000 weavers, and exported 20 millions' worth of goods annually. The silk industry in Lyons counted 15,000 looms and 30,000 workers, while for the manufacture of silk stockings Lyons had 2,000 looms, Paris nearly as many, and Nimes 3,000. At Wesserling and Mülhausen in Alsace, even at Jouy, near Paris, was started the manufacture of printed calicoes and chintzes.

In many branches of industry, especially the manufacture of pins, the machinery used, according to the *Encyclopédie*, was very primitive. France was enormously behind Great Britain in most respects and did not make any considerable progress until the time of Napoleon I.

In 1722 Bielefeld, a German, wrote : "The industries of the country are admirable, every article it sends forth is finished and complete, and charms by the merit of its invention and the perfection of its workmanship. It is these qualities that give to French manufactures their enormous sale, and the rumour is current that the nation realises from its foreign trade in fashionable stuffs alone 14 millions of livres." These indications certainly announced bright prospects for French industries, but what were they compared to the future that stretched before agricultural France ?]

Jura) and a few in the possession of nobles; these serfs were held in mortmain, that is, they had no power to will away either the lands they occupied or their personal belongings, because all they owned was the property of the nobles.

Those of the peasants who had remained free, had mostly all become proprietors in their own right. There were, according to Necker, when he entered upon office, "an immense number of small properties in France." How had the French peasant who, in addition to bearing practically the whole burden of royal taxation, was obliged to pay ground-rent to the lord and tithes to the church, to render statute labour to the crown and support the passage of troops through his farms, to endure wars, famine, scant crops, and disease, contrived through it all to add constantly to his possessions of land? The answer is mainly to be found in a study of the traits that made up his character at that time and that still distinguish him in certain provinces to-day, namely: his wonderful ability to save, his greed for gain, his talent at concealing the true condition of his affairs, his passionate love for the soil; but the reason for the phenomenon also lies in the very nature of things themselves.

Now the natural laws that govern such conditions decreed then as they do to-day that the proprietor who does not cultivate his land shall derive from it but little profit, also that the proprietor who does not live upon his land shall obtain from it virtually nothing. At that epoch if the proprietor of an estate happened to belong to the lesser provincial nobility, the chances were that he was ruining himself trying to keep in repair a château, often immensely large, that was little more than a monument of past opulence and power; he was not in his own person a source of riches since he held it beneath him to live otherwise than "nobly"; that is, to pass his days in any other occupation than that of the hunt. Should he, however, belong to the court nobility, unless he was fortunate enough to secure some remunerative post, he was certain to ruin himself all the more speedily in splendid attire and extravagant living, at play at the king's table where enormous sums were lost, and in all the wild and wasteful follies that had their origin at Versailles.

The noble, great or lesser, who sees his resources dwindle to a point where they are insufficient to meet all his demands, makes up his mind to part with a portion of his ancestral estates; not the château, ornamented with coats-of-arms and crowned with weather-cocks, but some little piece of the land that lies about it. Even then, after he has gone so far, pride steps in and prevents his making a definite transaction of the sale; consequently all purchasers of his own rank or of the bourgeoisie withdraw leaving only the peasant, who alone is willing to accede to terms whereby the former owner reserves a "superior proprietary right," or a "right of repurchase." The peasant knows by experience that the noble will never be in a position to buy back what he has sold; nevertheless he faces with a courage that is truly admirable the necessity of paying this same noble his claim of *lods et ventes*, which are recurrent taxes and will be put into effect at every death on one side or the other, and has also the full knowledge that his position as an independent proprietor will be a far more difficult one to support than that of the farmer on the estate, whom the noble feels himself in a measure bound to uphold in time of trouble. Some writers have even declared his condition to be worse than that of the negro slave in our colonies whom the master at least feeds and clothes. But what of all that? The French peasant is determined to be a proprietor in his own right, to expend the labour of his hands on soil

that belongs to him. Hence it was found, after 1760, that one-third of the national territory, according to the estimation of Young, had passed into the hands of the peasants, who would not have been content to rest there if the vastest domains in France, those belonging to the clergy, had not come under the law of mortmain, that is, had not been inalienable.

Thus on the one side is the noble who has sold everything salable that he possesses except his château, but still retains superior rights over his former property, and on the other the peasant who gradually, bit by bit, has become the real proprietor. The one grew steadily poorer though he was practically exempt from the payment of taxes, while the other grew constantly richer though bearing the whole burden of state taxation, and paying certain dues to the noble besides.

In most cases the noble retained a right of sovereignty over his former estate which gave him the exclusive privilege of hunting and fishing within its boundaries. After his pigeons (right to maintain a *colombier*, pigeon-house) had done damage to the newly sown seed, his hunting packs would devastate the crops; and all the year around depredations were committed by the rabbits of his warren and the wild beasts of his forests. Occasionally he could constrain the later owner to make exclusive use of his wine-press, mill, and ovens, against the payment of rent (right of *banalités*), and also claimed the right to demand hours of service, toll on all merchandise that crossed the bridge or any part of the lands, and a certain percentage of profit (right of *potage* and of *boucherie*) on all the wine and animals that were sold, and a guard-right in return for freedom from duty of guarding the castle; and this even where the castle had not been in existence for centuries.

Sometimes the noble counts, among the appurtenances of his estate, a prison, a pillory and, should he possess power of life or death, a gallows (*potence*. The meaning of the word *potence*, according to its etymology, is power). In the neighbourhood of certain villages there are to-day places designated by the name of "Justice," or "*Fourches*" (forks), which indicate the precise spot on which a gallows formerly stood.

After his duty to the noble has been fulfilled the peasant still owes a debt to the church — the tithe; and to the king he is obliged to pay talliage, capitation and the *vingtièmes* (twentieths). He is bothered by agents on account of his salt, his wine and other liquors, and in rendering his enforced service it is always upon the king's highways, never upon his own roads that he is obliged to work. He must further assist in the erection of barracks, in the deportation of beggars, galley-slaves, exiles, military baggage and ammunition.

If he has occasion to draw up a legal document there are the registry-clerks with whom he has to deal and the stamp-tax that he has to pay; but last and heaviest burden of all, it was the peasant who took part almost alone in the drawing of lots for the militia — a system for which the modern one of conscription offers an equivalent.

There was another thing which added to the French peasant's distress; he felt himself stranded and alone in the midst of his difficulties, the old seignorial hierarchy having completely broken up, and his natural protectors no longer offering him protection. The noble took to being absent most of the time, living at court, or with the regiment; or, in case he still resided in the village, he interested himself in nothing but his own affairs. Had he chosen to oversee the election of the syndic and the assessment of taxes, to regulate the hours of statute-labour and the drawing of lots for the militia, he could have rendered great service to his former dependents by preventing much injustice; but the fallen petty sovereign regarded all such tasks as beneath him. When the peasant became rich he sent his sons to school with the intention of making them bourgeois, or of buying for them a small office of the king; thus a force native to the village became lost to it in after years. The peasant could of course betake himself with his troubles to the curé, who was a man of far higher culture than himself; but the curé, while he usually remained as poor as the man who labours with his hands was yet the church-official to whom was paid the tithe. In this fashion the peasant found himself caught in a circle formed of employés, minor functionaries, and the syndic of the village, who were by no means his natural chiefs. After having been "devoured for centuries by wolves," as he complained, he was now to be "devoured by insects."

In England the true protector of the peasant against arbitrary taxation, the exactions of fiscal agents, and the insolence of royal functionaries was the proprietary-lord, the landlord.

Between the French *seigneur* and the *landlord*, between the *fief* and the *manor*, the lapse of several centuries had created a vast difference. The English lord, not deeming it beneath his dignity to perform useful service, and refusing to ruin himself in court living, or to be cheated out of his substance at cards with the king, had found means to grow rich, instead of constantly poorer as had been the case with the French nobility, by taking advantage of all the new ideas introduced into a system of agriculture far in advance; but more especially by raising cattle, an industry that had rapidly developed in England, bestowing upon its inhabitants their classic name of "beef-eaters." Far from allowing his domains to crumble away from him bit by bit, he kept constantly widening their confines; and the rights he retained for himself were only those which offered some solid advantage, the purely vexatious claims he willingly relinquished.

As early as the reign of Charles VII the French nobility had begun to accept and profit by a system that relieved its members of all necessity of paying taxes, allowing the whole weight of the public burden to fall upon the shoulders of the people; whereas in England nobility and commons stood united against royal despotism, ready to share all public charges provided they were given equal recognition by the representatives of the nation. The English agriculturist had no causes of complaint against his landlord; side by side with him he grew in wealth, suffering no extortions such as oppressed the peasant of France, and knowing not the hate and rancour with which the latter's heart was filled. If in certain respects he still depended on his landlord, he could always be sure of finding in him a strong support. While the French noble, when he did not vegetate in idleness, was occupied in seeking adventures in the army, or his fortune at court, the landlord lived quietly in his own house, on his own estates, happy to feel himself master in his home, and indifferent to the royal favour; quite content with the distinction of having the finest breed of cattle in his stables, and the latest pattern of machines in his sheds. He was the recognised chief, acknowledged even by the king, of the community in which he lived; was president of the Factory Council, commandant of the militia — even justice of the peace when occasion arose.

The French noble, on the other hand, had ceased to be treated as a person of any consequence by the royal administration; in official language he was merely "first citizen" of the village to which he belonged. If he happened to reside in the village he enjoyed the proud distinction of occupying the bench of honour (*banc d'œuvre*, so called because it was elaborately

sculptured) at mass, of being named in the prayers of the Sunday service, of having holy water presented to him, and of possessing the right of family sepulture in the church. There is nothing, can be nothing in common (save in a few exceptional cases), between him and the peasant; and indeed were it otherwise, would the sub-delegate permit him to mingle in the affairs of the parish?

The landlord, on the contrary, takes part in all the public affairs and elections possible; he often either actively supports a candidate of his own choosing or becomes a candidate himself. In order to engage in politics with efficacy and success he finds it necessary to become allied with the farmers, to exchange with them friendly hand-clasps, to invite them to his board where his lady presides — to enter into close relations with them in a word, that the propaganda may be properly furthered.

Certain words have been endowed with great significance in themselves; in France the distinction was always maintained between a *gentilhomme* (gentleman) and a *roturier* (man of low birth), even though the latter were a very pattern of refinement and good breeding; in England the term "gentleman" embraced both the noble by birth and the individual, whoever he might be, who was able to rise above the crowd by reason of superior fortune, education, or talents.

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY YEARS OF LOUIS XV

[1715–1748 A.D.]

> Starting from the reign of Louis XV the nation has no longer a head, history no longer a centre; at the same time with a master of the higher order, great servants also fail the French monarchy; it all at once collapses, betraying the exhaustion of Louis XIV's latter years; decadence is no longer veiled by the remnants of the splendour which was still reflected from the great king and his great reign; the glory of olden France descends slowly to its grave.— GUIZOT.

IN the last years of his life, Louis XIV had indeed dazzled the world by the splendour of his government and the theatrical pomp of his court; but he had outlived his renown. A universal feeling had grown up against the oppression of an arbitrary military dominion, springing from the will of a bigoted man, who looked upon everything as subject to his control, and who was surrounded and misled by flatterers and priests, and a change was earnestly desired. This extensive and sullen discontent arose from the general decay, the impositions and oppression of the numerous farmers and undertakers of the public taxes (*traitans*), from the impossibility of maintaining the credit of the nation any longer, of meeting the current expenditure, or even paying the interest of the debt. This feeling sprang up in spite of the police and the bastilles, and took the deeper root because no man dared to utter a murmur of discontent, and such expressions could only find a vent in the most private and confidential circles.

All historical documents agree in expressing the conviction that the government and administration could no longer have been carried on as had been done under Louis XIV, and the integrity and peace of the kingdom be maintained. The king however wished to prolong his reign beyond the period of life, and conceived that he had provided for the carrying out of his plans by his will and codicils. It soon appeared, however, after his death, in 1715, that all dispositions are utterly inefficient which cannot be maintained by the bayonet when power has usurped dominion of right.

Louis XIV had adopted his illegitimate children into the number of the princes of the blood; the count of Toulouse and the duke of Maine, born without talents, were made completely unfit for any useful service by the

misfortune of a court education. The king nevertheless had appointed the latter to be guardian of his eldest great-grandson Louis XV, who was then five years of age, and committed the government to a regency during his minority. Marshal Villeroi was appointed to maintain the directions of the king's will by military measures.

But neither Villeroi nor the duke of Maine was at all a match for the duke of Orleans in the determination to use either cunning or force. He laid claim to the regency as the eldest legitimate prince of the blood. Philip of Orleans was the son of an original and vigorous-minded German princess [Elisabeth Charlotte of Bavaria[d]], whose scandalous memoirs have been sought out and printed; he combined talents, resolution, and skill, with a reckless contempt for all the principles of morality and religion.

The parliament was to be used as an instrument for annulling the will. Philip of Orleans therefore flattered its councillors by the assurance that he would again restore the parliament to that degree of influence and importance of which it had been deprived under the reign of Louis XIV. The people were consoled by the empty hope of being delivered from the intolerable oppression and torturing want under which they were suffering. He gained a powerful influence, from the same cause which made Robespierre so strong in 1793. The people entertained the expectation of being cruelly avenged on the blood-suckers and favourites of the previous reign through his instrumentality; this indeed was a degrading and inhuman joy, but it nevertheless had a great effect in the times of the Revolution. The humbled and slavish aristocracy, whose power had been almost annihilated by the monarch, were allured by the promise that all questions under the regency should be determined by plurality of votes, and that the different branches of the government would be intrusted to bodies of commissioners (*conseils*) formed from members of the aristocracy.

By the aid of the parliament the will was set aside, and the duke of Orleans (nephew of Louis XIV) was acknowledged as regent. The regent found the kingdom in desperate circumstances; and although he possessed abilities and skill, eloquence and wit, together with some degree of kindness and magnanimity, yet his devoted attachment to sin, his wilful contempt for virtue, honour, and truth, as things only fit for tradesmen and peasants, his extravagance and habitual indulgence in the grossest sensualities, to which he devoted night and day, and all founded upon a species of hellish philosophy, made him wholly incapable of undertaking any good designs.

When Louis died, the treasury was not only completely exhausted, there not only existed universal want and misery, but the credit of the nation was utterly gone, and the whole income of the country was pledged for two years to come. It appears from the autograph letters of the regent, preserved in the French archives, that a very few days after assuming the government, he found it quite impossible to obtain means of paying or maintaining the troops even for the next month. There was a universal cry for the punishment of those much-envied cheats who had subjected themselves to no legal penalties. The regent was impelled to the appointment of a most unjust tribunal by the expectation that he might be able to extort a sum of 200,000,000 livres from the guilty, after investigation of all the frauds which had been perpetrated under the former government. In the next year, this court of pains and penalties (*chambre ardente*) was instituted. The tribunal carried on its investigations through the whole of the year 1716, by means of terror, torture, and imprisonment. The first roll, which is followed by nineteen others, contains nineteen pages filled with the names of those

POLITICAL OFFICE BARODA

who were subjected to the inquisition, together with all the various documents connected with the process: the sum extorted amounted to 31,000,000 livres [or £1,220,000 sterling]. In the year 1717, this court became completely a means of terror. The number of persons from whom money was demanded reached 4,470, and it was estimated that they would yield 220,000,000 livres [or £8,800,000 sterling]. [The sum actually extorted, however, was 70,000,000 livres, of which the state treasury saw only 15,000,000.] The regent and the dissolute and ruined men whom he favoured shared the remainder. A universal feeling of indignation arose; but the regent read with complete indifference the most vehement attacks, which were full of well-merited reproaches, and even allowed them to be preserved among his papers, where they have since been found.

The brothers Paris deserve to be particularly mentioned amongst the number of those whom the regent used as instruments, though they did not exactly belong to the utterly depraved society with which he associated: they undertook the character of auxiliaries. This character they maintained under the regent, and afterwards under the duke de Bourbon, and ruled the whole state. They were born in the neighbourhood of the Piedmontese Alps, afterwards became distinguished as bankers in Paris, and at this time suggested various financial measures to the regent. Their advice sufficed to meet the demands of the moment, but its adoption afterwards became more ruinous to the nation than plague, starvation, or war could possibly have been. They discovered the most wicked means of defrauding the honourable and simple-minded of their hard-earned money, and of enriching the sensual and ostentatious with the possessions of the honest.

LOUIS XV

The melting-down of the coin gave occasion to innumerable frauds; for sterling money, which was either concealed or exported, became rare, whilst everyone was obliged to pay a higher price for all articles of necessity and ordinary wares, not only on account of the relation of the new money to the old, but to fill the pockets of the usurers as the price of their speculation. Lemontey[e] states the advantage which the regent derived from debasing the money at 72,000,000 livres; and the nation was obliged to pay this trifling gain at a loss which it is impossible to calculate. In order to compel the people to deliver up their hard cash for the purpose of being melted down, the government one while gave permission to export the precious metals and then suddenly prohibited exportation, and carried their severity even to search. The *visa* (an examination of the justice of the demand or

debt, and an arbitrary diminution of claims) affected the national debt and the holders of national paper in the same manner as the melting-down of the coin affected the possessors of cash. A sum of six hundred millions of debt was wiped out by national paper (*billets d'état*) which was not quite worth two millions. Before mentioning these measures, which led to a formal bankruptcy, in its nature altogether fraudulent, we may observe that the blame of these arbitrary proceedings is not to be thrown wholly upon the regent, but rather upon those councils by whose establishment he at first flattered the aristocracy, and made a pretence of softening and ameliorating the despotism of the last autocratic government.[1] The regent, however, by no means intended to concede unconditional powers to these boards, but reserved to himself the distribution of the business.

The abbé Dubois, who had been his tutor and led him into everything that was evil and wicked, afterwards worked for him as his private secretary. From this time all hope of a council of regency disappeared, which the duke had before promised to appoint, and in the following year Dubois alone, although privately, conducted the whole affairs of the state.

The two measures which had served to raise money for immediate necessities speedily increased the difficulties of the government and nation. The melting-down of the old coinage lessened the amount of sterling money and the mass of the precious metals which were in circulation, and the depreciation of the national debt annihilated the public credit. It was now proposed to meet these difficulties by the establishment of a bank, which was to increase the circulating medium and to sustain the national credit. This proposal was made by a Scotch speculator named Law, a man of great experience in money affairs and in trade, who proposed to the regent to effect by artificial means what it seemed impossible to accomplish in a natural way.*f*

JOHN LAW AND THE "MISSISSIPPI BUBBLE"

The duke of Noailles had shown great energy and had set in motion all the resources of finance. But he had made no innovations, and according to his plans, he required not less than eleven years to restore the balance between revenue and expenditure. The regent wished more expeditious measures to be adopted. There was at the court a man, who, while all the other financiers, now at their wits' end, could talk of nothing but bankruptcy, proposed what he said was an infallible means not only of preventing any catastrophe and of paying the debts of the state, but of raising France to a degree of prosperity never before attained by her or any other nation. This man was a bold speculator and a brilliant man, whose glowing and confident expositions of his plans could not fail to be well received at the Palais Royal.

John Law was born in Edinburgh in April, 1671. His mother, Jane Campbell, was a descendant of the ancient and illustrious family of the duke of Argyle. His father was a rich banker and Edinburgh goldsmith. When the son came of age and found himself master of his father's fortune, he hastened to leave Edinburgh for London. His love affairs led to a duel, he killed his adversary and was condemned to death. A pardon was obtained, but he was very soon imprisoned again in the Tower of London. He succeeded in making his escape, and took refuge in Holland, where he

[1 These councils were six in number, each composed of ten members, chiefly of the feudal nobility: the councils were those of Finance, Foreign Affairs, War, Navy, "Despatches" (internal affairs), and "Conscience" (church affairs).]

became secretary to the English banker at Amsterdam. He also came to understand the fecundity of money at interest, thought he had discovered the secret of national wealth, and conceived a plan of a bank on a much vaster scale than anything he had seen. He visited successively Genoa, Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples, and Brussels, rendering his systematic knowledge more complete and gaining money by speculation. But he was anxious to make practical application of his ideas, and proposed to the Scotch that he should open a national bank. The plan, however, was rejected.

He next addressed himself to the king of Sardinia, who replied that he was not sufficiently wealthy to run the risk of ruining himself. Next, he went to Paris. This was in 1708, during the ministry of Desmarets, a time when the finances of France were at their lowest ebb. Law first became known as a daring gambler. The duke of Orleans, who had frequently met him, was attracted by Law's fine manners, and soon became very friendly. But the head of the police ordered Law to leave Paris on the pretext that he knew too much about the games he had introduced into the capital. He continued to enrich himself by gambling and by speculations in the public funds. But as soon as he heard of the death of Louis XIV he hurried back to Paris, taking with him his fortune, which amounted to 1,500,000 francs. Before long he had regained the confidence with which he had inspired the duke of Orleans by his theories.

Law wished to create a bank, to be the universal regulator of credit, associating its interests with those of the state, and constituting it the depository of all the money belonging to private individuals, cashier to the king, and the greatest financial monopolist in the kingdom. All enterprise and activity were to proceed from the bank, all wealth was to flow into it; it would prevent either scarcity or superfluity of money, and would, in some ways, fulfil the functions of the heart in the social organism. He defines it "as a general fund which provides conveniences and advantages for every class in the state"; and as it had for a long time been observed that a well directed commercial house could enjoy credit amounting to ten times its capital, he claimed that by getting all the money of the kingdom into his bank, he would be enabled to place notes amounting to ten times its value in circulation. Thus he would, by the actual increase of the currency, and by the numerous advantages afforded by the new money, increase the wealth of France to almost ten times its former value.

What a splendid prospect! Had not such a man a right to say that there are financial combinations which are of more importance to a nation than a victory in warfare? In seven years his bank would raise the national revenue to three billions, and that of the king to three hundred millions. The immense quantity of money that would be put into circulation would do away with usury, and would make the interest on money fall to three per cent. It would considerably increase the value of landed property, so that landowners would be able to pay off the principal of their debts, and the state to diminish the interest on its own. Commerce, free from discredit, and the thousand other fetters which still bound her, would become more flourishing than ever.

The financier was so blinded by belief in his system that he did not perceive what great principle he was tampering with. Law thought the future too full of promise to be hindered by temporary obstacles. If the nation were compelled to accept the system at first, people would soon be eagerly crowding round the gates of the bank, when they had seen the system fully

developed and enclosing the whole of France in its gigantic net. For as yet he had only divulged part of his ideas. "The bank," he said, "is not the only enterprise nor the greatest that I have in my mind. I will produce a work which will surprise Europe by the changes it will effect in favour of France — greater changes than any which have been produced by the discovery of India or the introduction of credit." This great work, of which he prophesied such marvels without revealing its nature, was a commercial company the idea of which had been suggested to him by the English East India Company.

The company would support the bank by making use of its money; the first would provide commerce without means for carrying on trade, with funds; the second would provide an investment which would be always ready for money that was lying idle. Supported thus by each other, nothing could shake their stability. The whole nation would be formed into a body of merchants whose cashier would be the bank, and who would consequently enjoy all the advantages of commerce both in money and in goods.

What was the use of grinding the people down by the imposition of taxes to obtain from them money with great difficulty which the king could create at will? The payment of taxes would be less a subsidy furnished to the king by his subjects than a greater activity given to the circulation of money. The bank would supply all state necessities, and would run no risk in doing this because it would have as a foundation the enormous profits of the company, which would embrace within itself all the national commerce, all the profits of former companies, of tax farmers, of royal officials, and private individuals. It would absorb into its vast entity, the navy, the colonies, manufactures, the coining of money, and the collection of taxes. The result would be a shower of gold and bank-notes on a nation become energetic, business-like, and rich.

In short, the miserable kingdom left by Louis XIV, so crushed by debt that it seemed almost impossible to restore her solvency, would suddenly develop into a state more flourishing and happy than any of those whose prosperity and happiness had become proverbial.

Unfortunately this miracle was never to exist except in Law's own imagination. He was misled by a principle which he had so much exaggerated that it ceased to be true. It is true that the introduction of money into a kingdom facilitates trade and gives an impetus to commerce. This he understood. What he had not grasped was that this favourable influence has its limits, and that in the relations which exist amongst civilised people a nation must of necessity soon reach them. When the quantity of money increases without such increase being the fruit of a larger national industry, is the nation richer? And were it possible suddenly to increase the money in France to tenfold its value, would the wealth of France be augmented in the same proportion? No! Money and capital are two distinctly different things.

In the sixteenth century, Spain possessed more gold than all the rest of Europe put together, but this money did not make her rich because money could not remain in a country where there were no manufactures, but was absorbed by the commercial nations as surely as steel is attracted by a magnet. This was the capital error of the author of the system. He thought he could force circulation and increase wealth by the abundance of money he was about to create, thus mistaking effect for cause. As soon as this money had been put into circulation, it would have decreased in value, just as merchandise does when the markets are glutted. Law ought to have aimed at increasing

products, not money. But the revival of commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, which are the true sources of all wealth, cannot be brought about in a day, on a banker's order, in an unprosperous country.

Thus the system rested on two false principles; Law had failed to grasp two truths: (1) an increase of money is not an unfailing sign of a proportionate increase in the wealth of any country; (2) money is not simply an arbitrary sign of value. This accounts for his failure as financier. In the practical application of his ideas, his want of political experience led him into two mistakes even more fatal to his success than his economic errors: he thought that the prince would never be mad enough to ruin his bank by overstepping his credit; he considered that violence might successfully be employed to compel the nation to accept his system. Of these mistakes the first exhausted the bank and precipitated bankruptcy; the second caused the greatest suffering in France, and brought about terrible poverty.

In spite of its inconsistencies and mistakes, however, the system was, nevertheless, the most remarkable economic work which had appeared up to that time, and its author has been placed in the front rank of reformers. There were banks before his time; but he was the first to see the full extent of their utility, and to realise the importance of credit. It is easy to criticise his theories and to point out the weak points in his schemes now that society has for a long time practised credit. But at that time everything connected with the subject was new, and had to be worked out amidst obscurity and contradiction. The mere fact that Law raised such questions and gave up whole years of his life to demonstrating his theories and forming a regular system; that he risked his life and fortune to put it into practice, shows that he was a man of superior genius.

But meanwhile the regent was tempted, and in spite of the opposition of part of his council, a bank was established May 22nd, 1716. The bankers and tax receivers protested; but commercial men eagerly accepted this convenience; bank-notes and money circulated; manufactures were revived. The new institution, having successfully overcome all obstacles, was united with the state, which had not dared to adopt it before. On the 10th of April, 1717, the tax receivers were instructed to honour the bank-notes at sight, and on the 4th of December, 1718, the name of The Royal Bank was assumed.

Success emboldened the innovator. He added to the bank a commercial company, thus making sure of an investment for the money he had just created. This company was established in the month of August, 1717, under the name of *Compagnie d'Occident*.[1] After having languished for a year, it suddenly became very flourishing, by means of one or two strokes of luck. On the 4th of September, 1718, it acquired a tobacco monopoly and on the 20th of July, 1719, that of coinage, while under the new name of the *Compagnie des Indes*, it united all the privileges and all the business of the old French maritime companies. The number of its shares, first fixed at two hundred thousand, was augmented by fifty thousand in May, and again by fifty thousand in July, 1719. In September of the same year, having obtained the lease of the monopolies and promised the king a loan of 1,500,000,000 francs, they were finally increased by four consecutive issues to 624,000.

These shares, issued originally at 500 livres, were worth 18,000 on the exchange, and were much in demand. Those who had opposed the new institutions felt themselves in the wrong and were silent; the king's debts

[1 It was popularly known as the Mississippi Company, its object being the development of the trade in the valley of this river. Tales of vast imaginary gold and silver mines in this region excited the populace to a frenzy of speculation. The 500-livre shares touched 22,000.]

were paid, pensions were redeemed; taxes were diminished; favours were lavished on the courtiers; manufactures were encouraged, marvellous fortunes were made in a miraculously short time, and the nation, thinking itself enriched by ten billions, plunged into luxury and self-indulgence.

But this wealth was imaginary, and the very magnitude of it ought to have shown people that it must be so. When the first enthusiasm had passed away, everyone flew to the bank or to the company to change his note or sell his share. In vain did the bank try to prove how much more valuable the notes were than hard cash, because of the royal privileges attached; in vain did the bank turn for support to the company with which it had been united on the 23rd of February, 1720. People would have none of its paper money, and violent measures were resorted to, in order to compel them to continue to accept, which increased the bank's discredit. Parliament, which had opposed the system from the first, did all it could to hasten its ruin; and the bank was obliged to keep on incessantly issuing fresh notes whose value fell lower and lower as they increased in number. However, in the hope of preventing a greater depreciation, the bank itself, on the 21st of May, ordered that the value of notes and shares should be legally diminished by one-half. After this, confidence in the bank was at an end, and henceforth every effort was made to abolish a system utterly rejected by France.

A Courtier of the Time of Louis XV

The bank stopped payment. Starving people crowded round its doors, howling their execration on the authors of their misery. The company tried to redeem the notes by creating pensions, current accounts, and shares. These expedients failed. The bank was suppressed on the 10th of October, 1720, and on the 28th of the same month the shareholders were obliged to withdraw any claims. Law left France, and his enemy, D'Aguesseau, who undertook the liquidation of his debts, sequestrated all the assets of the company, and did not free them again until he had, by numerous high-handed actions, reduced the remains of the system to the sum of 1,700,000,000.

In the midst of these vicissitudes Law, in good as in bad fortune, remained always the same. He was inflexible in his theories and persisted obstinately in trying to realise the work he had planned. He acted with the impetuosity and violence of a man who, implicitly believing in his own ideas, does not trouble himself as to whether the crowd has understood or follows him; who feels quite indignant with unforeseen hindrances which nature places in his path.

He persisted in the belief that he had found the true secret of the wealth of nations, and to the end of his life he firmly asserted the power of credit. After the fall of the system, he wrote these words in far-off exile: "Do not forget that the introduction of credit has brought about more changes amongst the powers of Europe than the discovery of the Indies, and that it is for the sovereign to give and not to receive, and that the people are in such need of it that they will come back to it in spite of themselves, and however much they may mistrust it."

We must do this man justice. He was not, as some have asserted, a mere adventurer who came to France to take advantage of the regent's weakness. He was the first financier who carefully studied the phenomena and causes of wealth production. If he was wanting in that politic prudence which was necessary for a successful guidance of the people, and if he was mistaken in his theories, his principles were at any rate clearly defined; and he devoted his life, not to making his fortune, but to trying to secure the triumph of his ideas.

"When I entered the service of the king," he wrote to the duke of Orleans, "I had as much property as I wanted, I owed nothing, I had credit; I leave his service without property of any kind. Those who placed their confidence in me have been obliged to become bankrupt and I have nothing to pay them with."

He was right: France let him die a poor man; yet, if the memory of the ruin he had caused had not been too recent to yield to gratitude, France ought to have been grateful to him for the generous ideas he had propagated. He had tried to extend commerce; to restore the navy; to found colonies; he abolished burdensome taxes, and tried to abolish a corrupt magistracy, to create a simpler and less arbitrary system of taxation; finally, he established a bank which, had it continued, would have been of the greatest service to commerce, and would really have increased the wealth of the country. He made serious mistakes in his economic theories, and these mistakes had most terrible consequences; they threw the finances of the country into the greatest confusion and ruined innumerable families. But he was inspired by a desire to do good, was firm in principles which he thought true, and honest in his conduct.[1] His system was founded on a false principle which was but the exaggeration of a truth. *h*

Before proceeding with the history of the political period, it is desirable to quote the characters of the two chief figures of the time, from the immortal memoirs of the duke de Saint-Simon, who was in a sense the Pepys of France. *a*

SAINT-SIMON'S PORTRAITS OF THE REGENT AND HIS MINISTER

In relating occurrences where he had played a large part, the duke of Orleans always gave the praise to others and never spoke of himself; but it was difficult for him not to criticise those who were not "true blue," as he called them, and one could feel that he had a scorn and natural repugnance for those whom he had occasion to believe were not so. He also had the weakness to believe himself exactly similar to Henry IV in everything, to affect him in his manners, in his repartees, to persuade himself that he looked like him, even to his figure and face; and no other praise or flattery touched him or went to his heart so much as that. That was a complaisance to which I

[1 Saint-Simon, *g* who did not approve of Law's schemes, yet said of his character: "There was neither avarice nor roguery in his composition. He was a gentle, good, respectable man whom excess of fortune had not spoiled and whose deportment, equipages, table, and furniture could not scandalise anyone. He suffered with singular patience and constancy all the vexations excited by his operations until towards the last."]

could never bring myself. I felt too strongly that he looked for this resemblance just as much in the vices of this great prince as in his virtues, and that the one gave him quite as much pleasure as the other. Like Henry IV he was naturally good, humane, compassionate, and I have never known anyone more naturally opposed to the crime of destroying others or more sincerely removed from the thought, even, of hurting anyone, than this man, who has been accused of the blackest and most inhuman crimes. It might even be said that his gentleness, his humaneness, his kindness went to the extent of becoming a fault, and I would not hesitate to say that he made a vice of the supreme virtue of pardoning one's enemies. His prodigality, without cause or selection in the exercise of this virtue, came too near being senseless, and caused him many troublesome inconveniences and evils. He loved liberty as much for others as for himself. He praised England to me one day in this respect, as being a land where there were neither exiles nor *lettres de cachet* and where the king could forbid nothing but entrance into his palace and could keep no one in prison.

This prince, born to become the honour and masterpiece of education, was not fortunate in his teachers. Saint-Laurent was the first person to whose charge the boy was confided. He was the man in all Europe best suited for the education of kings. He died, however, before his pupil had outgrown the rod. It was the abbé Dubois who first insinuated himself into the friendship and confidence of a child who knew no one, and he made enormous use of it to scheme for fortune and gain his bread. He has played so important a part since the death of the king that his character should be made known.

The abbé Dubois was a little, thin man, a slender, pitiful object, with a light wig, a face like a beach martin's—yet with some intelligence of countenance. All the vices fought within him as to which should gain the mastery. There was continual noise and combat between them. Avarice, debauchery, ambition were his gods; perfidy, flattery, servility his means; complete impiety his repose; and the opinion that probity and honesty are chimeras on which people plume themselves but which actually exist in no one, was the principle of his conduct, in accordance with which all means were good to him. He excelled in low intrigues, he lived on them, could not get along without them; but they always had one end on which all his labours were concentrated with a patience which was terminated only by success or by the repeated demonstration that he could not get what he wanted, or unless groping thus in the depths of darkness he found he could see light better by boring a new hole. Thus he spent his life in underground passages. The boldest lies had become second nature with him, and were covered by a simple, straightforward, sincere, often a bashful manner. He would have conversed with ease and grace, had not his desire to see through others while speaking and the fear of going further than he wished developed in him a habit of stuttering which was a serious defect, and which, redoubled when he came to mix in important matters, became insupportable and sometimes unintelligible. Malicious, treacherous, and thankless, an expert master in the blackest deeds, terribly brazen when caught in the act, desiring everything, envying everything, wanting all the spoils, he was selfish, debauched, inconsistent, ignorant of all business, always passionate, carried away by rage, a blasphemer, and a fool. He publicly disdained his master and the state, business and the world in general, being ready to sacrifice everybody and everything to his credit, to his power, to his absolute authority, to his grandeur, to his avarice, to his threats, to his vengeance.

Such was the sage to whom Monsieur had intrusted his only son to form his habits, being advised to do so by two men, whose own were no better.

Such a good master lost no time with his new pupil, in whom the excellent principles of Saint-Laurent had not had time to take deep root. I will confess here with bitterness—since everything should be sacrificed to the truth—that M. le duc d'Orléans brought into the world with him a facility, or, to call things by their right names, a weakness which continually spoiled his talents, and which was of marvellous service to his preceptor throughout his life. Dubois flattered him from the side of manners, to lead him into debauchery and make him believe that to be the principle of a good worldly position, even making him despise all duty and decency, since this would make him more easy to be managed by the king than a well regulated conduct; he flattered him from the side of his intelligence, persuading him that he was too wise to be the dupe of a religion which in his opinion was only an invention of state policy to frighten ordinary minds and keep the people in subjection. Furthermore he instilled into him his favourite principle that probity in men and virtue in women are only chimeras with no real existence except in some fools who have let such bonds as those of religion be put upon them.

A FRENCH NOBLEMAN, TIME OF LOUIS XV

Unfortunately everything conspired in the duke of Orleans to open his heart and mind to this execrable poison. He became accustomed to debauchery, still more to the noise of debauchery, until he could not get on without it and was entertained only by noise, tumult, and excess. This it was which led him to commit the strangest and most scandalous deeds and, as he wished to surpass all his comrades, to mix with his pleasure parties the most impious speeches, which made him find a special pleasure in having the most outrageous debauches on the holiest days. Thus several times during his regency he chose Good Friday and other holy days for such performances. The more consistent and excessive a man was in his impiety and debauchery the more he respected him, and I have often seen him in a state of admiration verging on veneration for the grand prior because for forty years he had not gone to bed without being drunk, had not ceased to support mistresses publicly and to continually indulge in impious and irreligious remarks. Brought up among the intrigues of the Palais Royal, the duke had acquired the detestable taste and habit, even to the point of making it a principle, to embroil everybody with everybody else, and then to profit by it by making people talk against each other. That was one of his principal occupations during all the time he was at the head of affairs, and the one out of which he got the most pleasure, but which made him odious, and threw him into a thousand tiresome inconveniences. He was born bored, and he was so accustomed to living outside of himself that he found it unsupportable to return and was incapable of finding means to occupy himself. He could

live only in the movement and torrent of affairs, as at the head of an army, in the care of providing everything necessary for a campaign, or in the tumult and excitement of a debauch. This last also bored him as soon as it was without noise and excess. He threw himself into painting as soon as his liking for chemistry had passed. Afterwards he amused himself with making combinations of stones and sealing-wax by means of charcoal, the smell of which often drove me from him, and also with compounds of the strongest perfumes, of which he was always fond, and from which I deterred him because the king was very much afraid of them and almost always detected them.

In short, there never was a man born with so many different kinds of talents and so much ability to make use of them, and never was the life of an individual so unoccupied, or so given up to nothingness and ennui. Madame said the fairies had all been invited to his birth, that all had come and that each had endowed her son with a talent, so that he had them all; but that, unfortunately, one old fairy, who had disappeared so long before that no one remembered her, had been forgotten and she, angry at the neglect, had revenged herself by making absolutely useless all the talents he had received from the other fairies. It must be admitted that on the whole this portrait is a speaking one.

He was timid to excess, he realised it and was so ashamed of it that he affected the contrary, even priding himself upon his boldness. But the truth was, as became apparent afterwards, nothing could be obtained from him, either favours or justice, except by working on his fears, to which he was very susceptible, or by tiring him with importunity. He tried to escape by words, by making promises, of which his ability made him prodigal, but which only those who had firm claws could make him keep. Thus he broke so many promises that the most positive ones were counted for nothing, and he gave so many more to so many different people for the same thing which could belong only to one person, that this was a fruitful source of discredit to himself and caused much discontent.

Nothing deceived him or injured him more than his idea that he knew how to deceive everybody. His distrust of everyone without exception was also disgusting in him. This fault came from his timidity, which made him fear his most certain enemies and treat them with more distinction than he did his friends; from his natural facility, from a false imitation of Henry IV in whom this trait was neither the best nor most admirable. It is hard to understand how he was the only man whom Dubois succeeded in deceiving. Dubois had obtained influence over him when a child, while acting as his preceptor; he increased this power when the prince was a young man. It was his dearest care in every way to preserve his position with his master, since all his benefits came from him. They were not great at that time, but such as they were, they were very considerable for the valet of the curé de Saint-Eustache. His whole energy was devoted to not letting his master escape him. All his days were occupied by this watch; it regulated all his movements. His one desire was to have the whole world in his hand, business, favours, even the smallest bagatelles, to shipwreck anything that tried to slip through his fingers, and not to pardon those who attempted anything without him. Such persons he pursued with implacable hatred. This application and certain indispensable orders he had to give consumed all his time, so that he became inaccessible except for certain public audiences or for audiences to foreign ministers. Even the majority of the latter could not reach him and were reduced to waiting in the halls, on the stairs, and in other places where

they might catch him, where he was not expecting to meet them. At one time he threw into the fire a prodigious number of unopened letters, which had come from various parts of the world, and then exclaimed with satisfaction at having caught up with his business. At his death thousands of letters were found still sealed.

The public follies of Dubois, especially after he became supreme and did not control himself any longer, would fill a book. His frenzy sometimes led him to run all around the room twice, stepping only on the chairs and tables without touching the floor. The duke of Orleans has told me that he has seen him do this on many occasions.

Dubois died on the 10th of August, 1723, grinding his teeth against Chirac and his surgeons, whom he had never ceased to revile. They brought him extreme unction nevertheless. Of communion nothing was said, nor of having a priest near him, and he finished his life thus in the greatest despair and in a rage at leaving it. Thus fortune had made sport of him: she let herself be dearly bought at the expense of long years of all sorts of pain, cares, projects, devices, anxieties, toils, and torments of mind, and finally lavished on him whole torrents of grandeur, power, of immeasurable wealth only to let him enjoy it for four years — the period during which he was secretary of state, or only two years if we count the time when he was cardinal and prime minister — before she snatched him away in the very midst of its enjoyment, at the age of sixty-six.

At the time of his death he was absolute master of his master, being less prime minister than absolute ruler, having full power to exercise all the power and authority of the king. He was superintendent of the post, cardinal, archbishop of Cambray, with seven abbeys, for which he had an insatiable thirst clear to the end and had even commenced overtures for getting possession of those of Cîteaux, Prémontré, and of others. It was stated afterwards that he also had a pension from England of £40,000. I had the curiosity to investigate his revenues and I thought it might be interesting to insert here what I found, even diminishing the sum of his benefices in order to avoid all exaggeration:

Detail of the Annual Income of Dubois

Cambray	120,000 livres
Nogent-sous-Coucy	10,000
Saint-Just	10,000
Airvault	12,000
Bourgueil	12,000
Bergues St. Winoc	60,000
Saint-Bertin	80,000
Cercamps	20,000
	324,000
Prime minister	150,000
The post	100,000
	250,000
Pension from England at 24 liv. to a pound ster.	960,000

TOTAL

In benefices	324,000
Prime minister and the post	250,000
English pension	960,000
	1,534,000 livres (£63,916 or $319,580)

I have reduced his income from the port and from the office of prime minister; I believe also that he had 20,000 livres from the clergy as cardinal but could not ascertain the fact with certitude. What he had received and realised from law was immense. He had made lavish use of it at Rome for his cardinalship, but he still had a prodigious amount of it in cash.

He had a great quantity of the most beautiful silver and enamel plate, most admirably worked; the richest furniture, the rarest jewels of every kind, most beautiful and rare horses from every country and the most sumptuous equipages. His table was superb and exquisite in every respect and he did the honours of it very well, although he was very temperate both by nature and by habit. His position as preceptor to the duke of Orleans had procured for him the abbey of Nogent-sous-Coucy; the marriage of this prince, that of Saint-Just; his first journeys to Hanover and England, those of Airvault and Bourgueil; and three others he got through his supreme power. What a monster of fortune and of party influence! And how quickly precipitated!

"But one passed by, and, lo, he was not;
Yea I sought him, but he could not be found."

This passage from the Psalm would apply literally to Dubois.[g]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS; FREE THOUGHT

Whilst at home everyone had been engrossed in Law's system, French affairs abroad were being skilfully conducted by the minister Dubois. Despite all the virulence of Saint-Simon, who hated him like a snake, Dubois was a man of skill, if not of virtue. Following the regent's prejudices, he turned against Spain, and—a rare thing in French politics—towards England, from which he is believed to have had a salary of £40,000 a year. Louis XIV's fond hope, that the fact of his grandson being on the throne of Spain would insure alliance between the two countries, was not realised.[l]

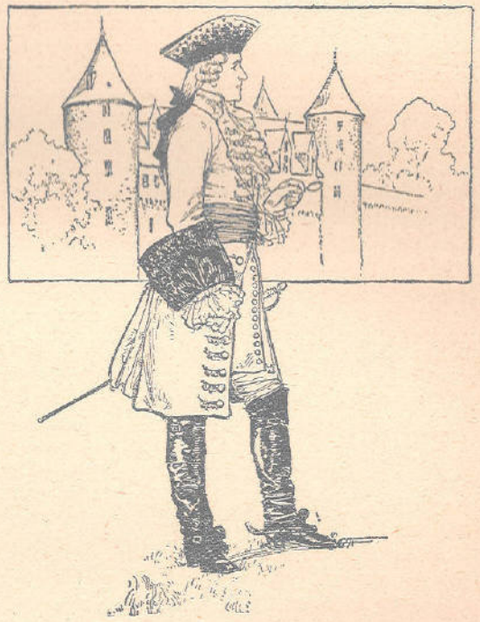
Spain and France were proved even then to be more divided by the barrier mountains, than united by the relationship of their kings. The Spanish minister, Alberoni, had reduced the expenditure of his country, and had filled the treasury. Great things entered his mind as soon as he found himself freed from debt, and he proposed to enlist the military services of the famous Charles XII of Sweden, in restoring the exiled monarch of England, James III [the Old Pretender], to his throne. He proposed also to encourage the Turks to attack the emperor; and he tried to create a civil war in France. When the Christian prelate had completed the plan of these benevolent measures, he despatched a Spanish expedition to seize Sardinia, and an army at the same time to take possession of the island of Sicily. All nations were roused at the sight of so much insolence and injustice: and the first spectacle which the promoters of the Spanish accession of Philip V and the restoration of the Stuarts saw, after the death of Louis XIV, was a combination against Spain, of France under the regent Orleans, and England under George I. To complete the amazing contrast between the two periods, Marshal the duke of Berwick,[1] son of James II, was sent into Spain at the head of a French army to overthrow Philip V, the grandson of

[1 It was the same Berwick whose splendid military ability had seated him there. See the history of Spain.]

Louis XIV. Towns were taken, and provinces seized, England regained her old supremacy on the sea, and Admiral Byng exterminated the fleets of Spain in the straits of Messina. Alberoni saw the badness of the move he had made, and patched up a dishonourable peace.[i]

The French fleets had also taken a large share in the ruin of Spanish naval power, but peace was accepted and this which Kitchin[c] calls a brief splash of European war was ended by the Treaty of London, 1720.[a]

Dubois did not long enjoy the dignities that his baseness had earned. Cardinal and minister in 1722, he expired in the following year. When on his bed of death, a curate advanced in haste to administer the sacrament to the dying man: Dubois repelled him. "What! administer the *viaticum* with so little ceremony as that to a cardinal; go, and consult as to the necessary forms." Ere the forms could be ascertained, the cardinal had died, as he had lived, not in the odour of sanctity. In a few months after, the regent was struck with apoplexy in the apartments of Madame de Phalain, his mistress, in the palace of Versailles: she cried for aid, but it did not come till the duke was cold. He expired in December, 1723, leaving three daughters, all notorious for extreme dissoluteness, and a son remarked for his piety and narrow intellect. The following satirical epitaph was inscribed upon the tomb of the duchess dowager of Orleans: "Here lies Idleness, the mother of all vice."



FRENCH GALLANT OF THE TIME OF LOUIS XV

"The regent," says the duke of Saint-Simon[g] whose incomparable memoirs conclude with this epoch, "was far more regretted abroad than at home." The English especially had cause to be grateful to a prince, the first wielding the sovereignty of France who had sympathised or joined with them in amity. The great majority of the French, however, accused this policy of selfishness and baseness; and were indignant at beholding their country acting, as it seemed, a part subordinate to English views. The duke of Orleans had moreover betrayed all parties in the state. The very Jesuits were dissatisfied at not obtaining complete predominance. The parliament felt itself juggled; although its resentments were not so profound, or did not proceed from views so exaggerated as Saint-Simon[g] lends to them. "The parliament," says he, "could not console itself for not having changed its simple nature as a court of justice into that of the parliament of England,

holding, however, the house of lords under the yoke." The general cause of complaint was the enormous increase of price in every article, first brought about by the depreciation of Law's paper, but which by no means subsided to its ancient level as soon as the crisis was past. The nobles acquired little increase of influence. Pensions certainly were heaped upon them; and not content with their hereditary domains, they shared with the sovereign the contributions levied on the inferior classes. But this indefinite and unearned resource proved but a temptation to extravagance and to an oblivion of all economy. Habits of expense and luxury increased in a tenfold proportion; and the reign of Louis XV, which showered pensions, and aids, and employments on the noblesse, had the effect of impoverishing that order much more than Louis XIV had done; who indeed gave them naught, but who asked naught of them save obedience.

The splendid literature of the last reign was but the gilding, the precious ornament, of the stately edifice. Its tragedies and odes, its satires, sermons, fables, were written for the perusal or the audience of court. They were not born of popular feeling, and neither propagated nor influenced opinions deeper than taste. They are the domain of criticism, not of history. With the regency, however, French literature, though of a lower grade in genius and perfection, begins to assume much more importance. It was then that the great mass of the public, freed of the prestige, the moral ascendency, of a court which could excite nothing save contempt, arrived at the hardihood of having ideas and opinions of its own, not only in religious but on political and philosophical subjects.

Writers began to sow the seeds of thought, no longer on the narrow enclosure of the court and aristocracy, but in the open field of the public mind. Books that had hitherto never raised discord, except upon abstruse points of faith, amongst learned doctors, began in the regency to have general influence. A libel became a weapon as common and as poignant as the sword. The duchess du Maine employed men of letters in her husband's cause, and the regent employed others, Fontenelle for example, to draw up his manifestoes. No sooner did men capable of wielding the pen become conscious of their force, than they hastened to employ it. They were chiefly of the lower and degraded class, and felt sensibly the heavy oppression that weighed even less on personal than upon mental freedom. Not daring to affront the immediate instruments of this oppression, writers attacked or sapped the principles on which they were supported. Bayle had already assailed religion with his army of doubts and questions. The meekly froward Fénelon had dared, in his *Télémaque*, to define and criticise the duties of royalty. Voltaire and Montesquieu now followed in the track. The former, ridiculing intolerance, found wit so powerful and successful in his hands, that he was carried forwards to attack religion itself; an attack, however, that must have redounded to its triumph, had the national church not disgraced its creed by corruption, and betrayed it by ignorance. Montesquieu at the same time carried his inquiries into the unexplored regions of political philosophy. He was moderate, sage, shrank from revealing abuses, and often, when in his researches he has undermined or discovered the weak foundations of monarchic bulwarks, we find him instantly set to work to prop the tottering wall. But to counteract his own exertion was impossible. He excited inquiry; and when the curiosity of man is awake on such points, it must be satisfied by experience or demonstration. The latter is not to be met with in political theory; and the former is most often to be purchased at no less a price than revolution, anarchy, and crime.

THE MAJORITY OF LOUIS XV AND MINISTRY OF BOURBON

Whatever were the faults or crimes of the regent, he had at least acted an honourable part by his royal ward. He intrusted young Louis to the care of Villeroi, the attached friend of Louis XIV, and, consequently, the regent's personal opponent, if not enemy. For confessor and instructor, Fleury[1] was chosen, "because he was neither Jansenist, nor Molinist, nor Jesuit." Fleury was one of those mild personages to whom extremes are repugnant, and who prefer the middle course in all circumstances. A more fitting tutor could not have been selected to form a monarch's principles; but, unfortunately, he communicated to Louis much of the timidity and meekness of his own character.

The young king became sincerely attached to his kind and indulgent tutor, who, on his side, was not blind to the advantages of such influence. He refused an archbishopric, that would have removed him from court. On the occasion of a quarrel between Villeroi and Cardinal Dubois, the marshal was arrested; Fleury took fright, and retired also. The young king no sooner missed his tutor, than he gave way to the most noisy grief; wept, lamented, and was not to be pacified. Fleury was sought out, brought back, and the joy of Louis was extreme. The future influence of the instructor might be augured from this: but his meekness, and also his extreme age, disarmed all envy.

When the death of the duke of Orleans was known, the duke de Bourbon, lineal heir of the house of Condé, and first prince of the blood, aspired to be minister. The name of regent was extinct, Louis being now of age. The duke got the patent of prime minister drawn up, went with it to the king, and asked him boldly for the place. The young monarch looked at Fleury, who made a sign of assent, and the duke de Bourbon had the appointment.

Monsieur le duc, as the prime minister was universally called, had hitherto distinguished himself by meddling in the affair of Law, and by his inveteracy against the duke du Maine. He was thus a political Jansenist. One of the first acts of the duke de Bourbon was to display his zeal for orthodoxy; and, at the same time, be avenged on the partisans of the duke du Maine, by a fulminating edict against the Protestants, renewing all the barbarities of the year 1685. England and Holland interfered, however, in behalf of their persecuted brethren, and the edict was modified.

Bourbon was governed by a mistress, the marquise de Prie, daughter of a financier, and an adept in the mystery of jobbing in the public funds. She introduced to the duke four brothers of the name of Paris, who had been in favour with the regent, and afterwards exiled by him. These were his finance ministers and counsellors. The marriage of the king was the most important point to be considered. He was betrothed to the infanta then educating at the French court: but the duke de Bourbon had his old political dislike to Spain. At length it was recollected that Stanislaus, the exiled king of Poland, had a daughter, who now shared his wanderings and misfortunes. A creature thus raised from distress to the throne of France could not but be grateful to those who elevated her. Thus reasoned Madame de Prie. Moreover, Maria Leczinska was mild, humble, pious. The daughter of the fugitive king of Poland became queen of France.

Relying on the attachment of the young queen, the duke de Bourbon became less scrupulous in his plans of administration. An edict was

[1 This André Hercules de Fleury, bishop of Fréjus, must not be confused with the abbé Claude Fleury.]

prepared for a new tax, called a fiftieth, but which, from its arbitrary valuation, was likely to prove a tenth. It was to last twelve years. The noblesse, who were not exempt from this tax, protested. The parliaments of the kingdom poured in remonstrances; and a scarcity of corn happening at the same time, raised the popular voice, in unison with that of the court and judicial body, against the minister. At such an unpropitious moment did the duke de Bourbon think proper to affront Fleury; wishing to bar him of his privilege of being present during the minister's consultations with the king. The monarch, who did not suspect any affront to Fleury, consented: and the latter, finding himself excluded, took the resolution of leaving Paris, and retiring to Issy: he, at the same time, wrote a pathetic and meek letter of resignation and farewell. Louis, on reading it, burst into tears, as of old. Fleury was recalled. An order, written by the monarch, commanded the duke to retire to Chantilly. Madame de Prie, who was with the queen when she heard of the duke's arrest, exhorted that princess to interfere. But it was too late: a letter from Louis desired even her to obey Fleury, who assumed the functions of prime minister, although, with characteristic humility, he declined the honours and the name.[i]

DE TOCQUEVILLE'S PORTRAIT OF FLEURY

In 1726 France required quietude and repose to enable her to regain her prosperity. She found both under the ministry of Fleury. Economical, disinterested, simple in his manners, unostentatious, desiring the reality of power but indifferent to its outward pomp, the bishop of Fréjus was the right man for the time. Under his auspices, confidence was restored both at home and abroad, and commerce was extended, because the moderation of the minister came to be regarded as a pledge of security.

This same moderation gave a weight to French diplomacy which it had never before possessed. Under Louis XIV it had ruled by fear; but Fleury's policy was to do everything possible to promote peace. His administration was the most fortunate period of the reign of Louis XV. He was one of the few ministers whose memory was honoured by the people, because he loved the state, and tried to lighten its burdens without compromising the honour of France. Nevertheless, though history truly records the good that he did, it has some serious charges to bring against him.

Fleury's cunning and subtlety were often akin to knavery. His economy sometimes degenerated into a stinginess injurious to financial interests. He never forgot an offence; his resentment was implacable. Those who had served in the government of the duke de Bourbon were always in disgrace with him. The queen was never forgiven for having taken part in the plot which Madame de Prie had formed against him. He constantly prevented her from taking any share in what was going on, and he thus helped to destroy intimacy and confidence in the royal household. Favours asked by the queen were always refused; if she complained to the king he would reply coldly, "Do as I do, madame, do not ask him for anything." On another occasion, when, at the instigation of Fleury, the king had banished the duke de Bourbon and the marquis of Prie, he wrote to the queen, their protectress: "I pray you, madame, and if necessary I order you, to do all that the bishop of Fréjus tells you, regarding him as my representative." It is difficult also to forgive this minister for having prolonged the minority of Louis XV and for having encouraged in him natural indolence and lack of self-confidence, for the purpose of directing him.

Fleury, priest, bishop, and cardinal, had no true understanding of the real interests of religion. He treated the Jansenists with severity, because they differed from him on several points, but was indulgent towards the men who had no faith and who were beginning to spread unbelief. The quarrel about Jansenism, which had remained in abeyance owing to the indifference of the duke of Orleans and the duke de Bourbon, was reawakened by persecution. We see quarrels arising between clergy and parliament, the king interfering without success, and scandal carried to an excess which became ridiculous. All this furnished weapons for the philosophers, and in the midst of these pitiful disputes, faith became gradually weaker.

Fleury did not wish to be prime minister. Dubois had dishonoured this title. He assumed the more modest one of minister of state. What, after all, is the name, if one possess real power? The king announced that the office of prime minister was suppressed, and that henceforth, like his great-grandfather, he intended to govern for himself. In order to complete this mystification, they dared to give it the stamp of religion.

The people rejoiced. They thought themselves safe in future from ministerial despotism. Therefore great satisfaction was shown. But prayers addressed to heaven were powerless as opposed to vices engendered by the early training of the young king.

If the bishop of Fréjus disdained the empty title of prime minister, he nevertheless aspired to that high ecclesiastical dignity which every priest, however spiritual he may be, looks upon as the goal of ambition. He wished to be a cardinal. On the 11th of September, 1726, the king kissed him publicly when giving him the hat. "If ever there was a fortunate man in the world," says Anquetil,[k] "it was Cardinal Fleury. He was looked upon as the most delightful companion up to the age of seventy-three; and even then, at an age when so many are forced to retire into private life, he took on himself the management of the kingdom. He was also considered one of the wisest of men."

The cardinal's first aim was to reduce expenses to the level of receipts. His favourite maxim was "peace abroad, economy at home." He looked on the state as a healthy body only requiring rest and wholesome diet to restore its strength. His administration was signalled by reforms, and ably resisted courtier's greed and the exactions of the court. Eager to reduce the burden of taxation, he abolished "the fiftieth" which had caused such bitter complaints, and granted a respite on payments in arrear. A wise measure filled up the deficiency caused by these munificent acts. Taxes on goods consumed were managed by government agents.[j]

WAR FOR THE POLISH CROWN (1733–1735 A.D.)

When the duke de Bourbon had sent back to Spain the infanta, who had been betrothed to Louis XV, and to whom Maria Leczinska had been preferred, Philip V was mortally offended at the insult to his daughter. It precipitated him into a treaty of alliance with Austria, the ancient rival and enemy of Philip. France and England naturally took alarm at a reconciliation so little to be expected. Horatio Walpole, ambassador at Paris, had imitated the sagacity of his predecessor, Lord Stair, by attaching himself and paying court to Fleury. The friendship that sprang up betwixt Fleury and the Walpoles, ministers of congenial feeling and pacific inclinations, contributed strongly to preserve the bonds of amity unbroken betwixt the two nations; these were now drawn closer by a treaty concluded at

Hanover, in opposition to that betwixt Spain and Austria. At the same time the duke de Richelieu, a brilliant young noble, was despatched to Vienna to endeavour to accommodate differences. He succeeded.

In the meantime the jealousies between Spain and England produced open war. The fleets of the latter scoured the West Indian seas and the Mediterranean: the Spaniards laid siege to Gibraltar. But the belligerents had scarcely more than time to put themselves in the attitude of war, when Cardinal Fleury interposed as mediator and restored peace in 1729. The pacific policy of the French minister thus imposed tranquillity upon Europe, until the death of the king of Poland, in 1733, and his disputed succession raised a flame that no efforts of mere negotiation could smother. Stanislaus, father of Louis XV's queen, had been elected king of Poland through the influence of the celebrated Charles XII of Sweden, then a conqueror and the arbiter of kingdoms. His fortune had fallen at Pultowa, and Russia had taken advantage of her ascendency, dethroned Stanislaus, and caused Augustus of Saxony to be elected in his stead. Augustus died in 1733, and France instantly turned her views to reinstate Stanislaus. Even Fleury dared not be indifferent to the father-in-law of his monarch. The cardinal forgot at the call not only his indolence but his economy, and transmitted large sums to influence the Polish diet. They were scarcely needed. Stanislaus, who had penetrated into Poland and showed himself in its diet, was elected king.

Louis XV

Russia and Austria declared against him, in favour of the son of the late king Augustus, who was allied by marriage to the emperor. They supported the rights of their candidate by numerous armies, which overran and devastated Poland. Warsaw could make no resistance; and Stanislaus shut himself up in Dantzic. Fleury, in the meantime, dragged into a war for a quarrel which he imagined ample bribes and negotiations would decide, began operations on a pitiful scale. He sent one ship and fifteen hundred men by the Baltic to the relief of Dantzic — a mockery of support. In vain the Polish followers of Stanislaus displayed the utmost heroism in behalf of their sovereign. The monarch made his escape through the army of besiegers, after perils and sufferings that alone might arm a host of warriors in his cause.

Poland was too distant from France to receive effectual aid. Armies however were raised: one under Marshal Berwick, destined to act on the Rhine; the other, commanded by the veteran Villars, crossed the Alps, and in conjunction with the duke of Savoy invaded Milan. These old generals of Louis XIV's wars won merely the honour of dying in arms. Villars overran the duchy of Milan, the conquest of which satisfied his ally of Savoy, and the Austrians, unmolested, were enabled to rally and return to the offensive. Villars, struck with mortification as well as with years and fatigue, was confined to his couch, when tidings reached him that the duke of

Berwick, having formed the siege of Philippsburg, was cut in two by a cannon-ball:[1] "Ah!" said the dying Villars, "that man was always more fortunate than I." The capture of Philippsburg was the limit of French conquest on the Rhine. Prince Eugene was their antagonist, and, although weak in numbers, Austria having Spain and Turkey as well as France to contend with, he succeeded in checking all their attempts to advance.

The most important achievement of the war was effected with least forces and in an unexpected region. Don Charles, that son of Philip V by his second queen, who had already succeeded to Parma, marched with a small army of Spaniards against Naples. The Austrians were little liked in this country, and a conspiracy in the capital opened the way for invasion. Visconti, the imperial viceroy, in vain endeavoured to make a stand at the head of the militia of the kingdom, which refused to second him. In a short time both Naples and Sicily passed from the power of the emperor into that of Don Charles. In the north of Italy the struggle was more obstinate and less decisive. A battle took place near Parma, in June, 1734, betwixt the French, under the marshals De Coigny and De Broglie, and the Austrians under Mercy. The latter was slain leading his troops to the charge; his army was worsted but not routed. The prince of Würtemberg took the command, and was able to give battle again in September at Guastalla. It was contested with equal fierceness and similar fortune. Würtemberg was slain in the action. The French had the honour of the victory, but none of the fruits. The resistance of the vanquished paralysed the success of the victors.

Cardinal Fleury now seized the first opportunity to treat. Austria found herself overmatched. In order to give Poland a king, she had exposed herself to the attacks of France and Spain, and had lost Naples and Milan, with little hope of recovering either. Still Russia promised effectual aid in the ensuing campaign, and England, despite of Walpole's pacific views, was shaken by the solicitation of her old ally, the emperor, by seeing Naples fallen as well as Spain to a Bourbon prince. The mutual jealousies of France and England were rising; but they were for the moment quelled.[l]

Paris became gay once more as in the first glorious years of Louis XIV, and Notre-Dame again showed her walls hung with captured flags. But flags and gaiety do not constitute the strength of a nation; and three years of victories and disappointments reduced all the contending parties to a thirst for peace, which it was impossible to satisfy too soon. Spain was the principal gainer here. She began the war to restore Stanislaus to the crown of Poland, and ended by placing her king's second son on the throne of the Two Sicilies, by the Treaty of Vienna, October 3rd, 1735. France accepted the Pragmatic of the emperor, and guaranteed Maria Theresa's rights. Stanislaus himself was contented with the title of king, and the possession of the duchy of Lorraine, which he obtained in 1738, and which after his death was to lapse to the French crown.

And here let us say, in passing, that no dethroned sovereign ever took such ample revenge upon fortune for her enmity, by showing what royal qualities of goodness, justice, and munificence he possessed. For eighteen years the one bright spot in Europe, where gentleness and peace established

[1 "So passed away one of the last of the great generals of Louis XIV: France never again," says Kitchin,[c] "saw his like till the genius of the Revolution evoked a new race of heroes." It is not known whether he was killed by the enemy or by his own soldiers. Just as he mounted the trenches, a battery on each side fired, and he fell. Martin[m] says, "a ball, perhaps from the French side, took off his head."]

their undisturbed reign, was the dukedom of Lorraine, where Stanislaus gave to all his people the example of a useful and virtuous life. His former oppressors, his rivals, his successors on the uneasy throne of Poland, all wrote of him and to him with the respect and affection his Christian qualities deserved; and when he died, loaded with years and benedictions, in 1766, it was felt that royalty had lost its brightest representative, and humanity itself one of the fairest of its examples. It is a pity that the narrowness of the scene on which his actions were performed circumscribed his fame within such contracted limits; but even the foolish vanity which has been called the dignity of history has not disdained to commemorate that a grateful people knew this powerless but delightful potentate by no other name than that of Stanislaus the Beneficent.

During the whole of the war, from 1733 to the preliminaries of peace in 1735, France had held the dignified place of righter of wrong and vindicator of her national honour. She had no hidden purpose of aggrandisement at the expense either of her friends or enemies, and Cardinal Fleury and Sir Robert Walpole had such confidence in each other's honesty that each was left to pursue his own course of policy untouched by the other. Europe seemed at last to have achieved a solid foundation for peace. It had arranged for the present, and made preparation for the future, particularly by guarding against any complication which might arise at the death of the emperor. The Pragmatic Sanction, securing the succession of the Austrian monarchies to his daughter, had been signed by France and Spain, the Two Sicilies, and Russia, and peaceably accepted by England and Holland.

THE DEGENERACY OF THE COURT

France sighed for repose, and found none. The king and courtiers were regardless of the national poverty and the commonest rules of decency. Shocking equally the reflecting by their manners and the impoverished by their extravagance, they seemed to exult in their exemption from the restraints of law or reason. An endless succession of unprincipled and designing women, not taken, as in the haughtier days of preceding sovereigns, from the ranks of the aristocracy, but from the lowest born of the people, governed the brutalised and voluptuous king. The nobility, instead of joining in a feeling of disgust at the proceedings of the court, were only embittered with the commonalty for interfering with their monopoly of royal favour. There was as violent a rivalry between titled and illustrious fathers for the disgraceful elevation of their daughters to the position of king's favourites as for the highest offices of the state.

Louis XV is saved, indeed, from a close inquiry into the particulars of his private life, as some noxious and unsavoury animals are defended from capture by the odour they spread. But it needs to be remembered that the reign of this man was the turning-point of aristocratic debauchery and degradation. Lower the upper ranks could not go, and a rebound was inevitable. Peace under such auspices might have been more injurious to greatness than the struggles of a disastrous war.

Louis had never been devoted to his wife. Fleury himself, fearing her influence over the king, had helped to prejudice him against her; though Louis appears to have been substantially faithful during a number of years, signalised by the birth of two sons and several daughters. A court without intrigue, a king without passions — here was no paradise for courtiers. A general conspiracy was formed to rouse the sleeper — at the head the duke

of Richelieu, seduction personified, vice made man. The plotters first urged Louis to gluttony: the taste for wine led to a love of gaming and the chase; these to experimental gallantries. At last an adroit and cynical valet succeeded in throwing into his arms a lady of the court who was taken with his appearance and who made all the advances — the countess of Mailly.

Fleury was suspected of having a hand in the affair. For his plans La Mailly would serve better than any other mistress — since the time of mistresses was come. The queen, it must be remembered, had rendered this development almost inevitable, even had no courtesan conspired against the fidelity of her husband. The most upright of women, Maria Leczinska was also the most unattractive; grave and austere, rigidly and tactlessly religious, she could not fail to be distasteful to a husband younger than herself, whose barren mind needed constant entertainment and distraction and who, while he had a cold heart, had hot enough blood. Louis no longer bore the mark of his weakly childhood. A domestic quarrel growing out of the indifference of his wife precipitated the crisis desired among the intriguers of the court. Madame de Mailly became the acknowledged mistress of the king. Fleury, who had easily tolerated the fact, would have liked to prevent or smother the scandal; but he now perceived that his power, hitherto absolute, had reached its limit, and he forebore to insist.

COSTUME AT THE BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV

The curb was snapped: Louis had been restrained only by a sort of physical timidity, to which was joined the dread of hell; but all inherent sense of integrity, all gentleness of heart was absent from his unfortunate character. He proved not more faithful to his mistress than to his wife; and he was not long in exceeding the bounds of ordinary libertinism and presenting to the eyes of France a spectacle unprecedented. Madame de Mailly was the eldest of five daughters of the house of Nesle, all remarkable either for beauty or grace of mind. The second sister, at the time a *pensionnaire* in a convent, was called to Versailles by Madame de Mailly with the fixed purpose of presenting her to the king, that in her turn she might amuse him, dominate him, and adopt the political rôle for which the mild La Mailly had no desire. Mlle. de Nesle succeeded in part: she captivated the king. She did not banish her sister; worse, she shared the king with her. When she became pregnant the king married her, for form's sake, to the marquis of Vintimille, grandnephew of the archbishop of Paris; the successor of the upright Noailles blessed the marriage without scruple. A third demoiselle de Nesle, married to the duke of Lauraguais, was added to the two elder. It seemed that Louis could relish no pleasure unseasoned by incest.

The regency had returned to Versailles — minus the life and gaiety. The moral effect of these examples is easily understood; as for the political consequences, they were not immediately obvious. Fleury had surrendered as to morals, but not as to expenditure: he defended, with great dexterity, his

authority and his treasury against the audacious Vintimille; and Louis, satisfied so long as his old preceptor spared him remonstrances concerning his debaucheries, turned a deaf ear to the insinuations of his mistress.

PROSPERITY IN THE COLONIES

Industry flourished in the cities, in spite of obstructive regulations. Commerce, scarcely retarded for a moment by a war without serious danger and wholly continental, pursued its way in the Mediterranean and the Levant, where France maintained a decided supremacy,[1] and took towards the Indies a flight which the government had not instigated, and which promptly filled it with apprehension. France executed spontaneously the designs of Colbert and of Law, and developed too maritime a spirit for the taste of Fleury, who wished to keep her hidden within her own frontiers. The events of this part of the eighteenth century are the best refutation of the melancholy presumption, born of her misfortunes, that France is not adapted for maritime commerce, the only commerce which extends indefinitely as well the power of a nation as its field of activity.

The enormous machine of the Compagnie des Indes, disentangled from the débris of Law's "System," of 1717, was again put forcibly in motion. The organic centre of this vast body was the new Breton city of Lorient (*L'Orient*); this home of the first Indian company under Colbert, a simple little village of eight or nine hundred souls in 1726, rapidly developed into a splendid city. The beautiful blue granite from the Blavet and the Scorff was fashioned into imposing edifices to adorn the wharves whence departed and whither returned the Indian vessels, each year more numerous and more heavily laden. The returns, amounting only to 2,000,000 francs [£80,000 sterling] a year, in 1714–1719, before the reorganisation of the company, reached 18,000,000 francs [£720,000 sterling] between 1734 and 1736. The Indian factories, so long slack, resumed work with triumphant activity; one hundred million natives sought the shelter of the French flag at Pondicherry; Chandernagor grew rapidly; the islands of Mascarenhas, that well-chosen post between Africa and the Indies, became the one, the Isle of Bourbon, a rich agricultural colony; the other, the Isle of France, a naval station whence France dominated the Indian Ocean. By a happy combination, which founded free trade upon a monopoly, while the company exercised exclusive control over the traffic between France and India, French merchants and agents of the company coasted from place to place, in every quarter of the Orient, as far as China. French vessels multiplied, encouraged by success; the English and Dutch companies simmered with jealousy to behold these newcomers hastening eagerly to make up lost time.

The honour of this mighty impulse was due not less to the old prime minister or to the comptroller-general than to the financiers who from Paris directed the operations of the Compagnie des Indes. This movement, entirely spontaneous, this venturous expansion of France, was impersonated by two men who, posted the one at Chandernagor on the Ganges, in the heart of India, the other on the Isle of France, the key to the oceans, executed or instigated projects new and bold. This is not the time to detail the labours, the glories, the misfortunes of these two men, equal in intrepidity and

[1] This advantage was offset by the fact that the French colours were unknown in the Baltic, and her commerce with Portugal, very flourishing before the War of the Spanish Succession, had fallen off since the Treaty of Methuen and been replaced by that of England.

determination, if not in character and genius — these men whom Colbert employed for the honour of France, whom the ministers of Louis XV baited one against the other, and one after the other sacrificed them both. It suffices here to write the names of Dupleix and Labourdonnais.

The American possessions showed a development even vaster than the Indian. Progress in America was not dependent upon a few great men, as in India. The tide of affairs sufficed to carry it along, since that man of genius, Law, had removed those obstacles which heretofore had stemmed the flood of colonial production. Canada, vast and cold, was the one exception; in spite of the fact that her population had materially augmented since the time of Louis XIV, she had made no such progress as that of the English colonies farther south. Louisiana, on the contrary, had prospered ever since the company, not knowing how to turn it to advantage, had ceded it back to the government in 1731; free trade had replaced the control of the company, by which all traffic had been restricted to that with France and prohibited with the neighbouring colonies. But the greatest interests, wealth, and population centred in the West Indies — the land of dazzling sunshine in the splendid tropical seas.

Here France had acquired, since 1717, a decisive and irresistible preponderance over England. Under Colbert, the wretched administration and the increasing calamities in France had deprived the colonies of the extension of domestic commerce. They were declining; raw sugar, bringing from 14 to 15 francs per quintal in 1682, had fallen in 1713 to 5 or 6. In 1696 the island of Santa Cruz (St. Croix) was abandoned; in 1698 there were not twenty thousand blacks in the French West Indies; and fifty vessels of ordinary tonnage sufficed for the island trade. At the end of 1717, the moment when Law's influence began to make itself appreciable, all was changed. A new regulation released French merchandise destined for the islands from all duty; authorised the free re-exportation of goods brought from the islands to France, subject to a tax of three per cent; and struck a blow at foreign sugar with a general tax. Marseilles was admitted among the ports enjoying commercial relations with America, which opened the Mediterranean to colonial commodities. French West Indian agriculture and commerce took huge strides. In 1740, French sugar had driven English sugar from foreign markets. French coffee from the same source, a product but recently filched from Dutch Guiana, had attained to a superiority almost as exclusive. The Spanish district of Santo Domingo remained dormant; the French, much smaller, reached a development that made it worth more than the entire English West Indies. Martinique, which in 1700 had but fifteen thousand native cultivators, in 1736 counted seventy thousand, and abounded in specie as well as in notes; general emporium for the Windward Islands, it received every year in its ports two hundred vessels from France and thirty from Canada. Guadaloupe, entering a little later into the movement, aspired to rival its rich and flourishing neighbour. These were the two queens of the Lesser Antilles, and the most productive of all the American archipelago in proportion to their extent.

The ports of France, in touch with colonial commerce, participated largely in this fruitful activity, of which the greatest benefit reverted to the ship owners. The splendid edifices with which the eighteenth century adorned Nantes, Marseilles, above all magnificent Bordeaux, afterwards so fallen into decay, are sufficient witness to the life of activity and splendour of those prosperous days. We can sum up in a few words the progress of France: before Law, if we can believe Voltaire, she possessed only three hundred

merchant vessels; in 1738, she counted eighteen hundred! Had Colbert lived to see these days, how great would have been his joy! How deep, also, his indignation at the paucity of the military marine! The old tubs of Tourville and Duguay-Trouin rotted among the silent docks in front of the empty arsenals, and the noble remnants of the naval armies were contemptuously relegated to oblivion. While France had next to no marine commerce to protect she had maintained a magnificent navy; now that she had vast interests to defend, she had neither vessels nor troops.

Two perils menaced the future of France on the seas — one imminent, of which we have spoken; the other less immediate, but growing steadily with the growth of colonial prosperity, forming indeed the basis of that prosperity — slavery. A splendid present, a future full of alarms — such was the prospect that faced urban France — France industrial, commercial, and maritime. Agricultural France, the vast dormant rural districts, offered a widely different aspect, a lamentable contrast — a dark and doubtful future, a present full of sorrow and bitterness. Fleury's economies had sufficed to ward off another bankruptcy, and to restore a partial equilibrium between the receipts and the expenditures, which would have been complete but for the war of 1733; but he had not remedied the chronic maladies of the rural population. The fatal system of taxation weighed each day more heavily; Fleury's inertia had done as much harm to the provinces as it had done good to commerce. The despotism of the tax-farmers and fiscal agents had free rein; in proportion as the government was weak at its centre, it was severe and unrighteous at its extremities. Intendants and their subordinates, commissioners, officers of elections, juggled the laws and the decrees of the courts; taxes were imposed without regard to justice; extortion, imprisonment, peculation, arbitrary favours and punishments — this was the regular régime for the most part. The intendants, guardians of order and national unity under Richelieu and Colbert, of severe and regular despotism under Louvois, were now, with a few honourable exceptions, no more than capricious pashas.

THE CORVÉE

Fleury was not, however, altogether inert in matters of public duty. He made one innovation, and here again his inevitable economy was fatal. The slight concessions in the matter of the *taille* were counterbalanced by a new change, by which the declining monarchy appropriated to itself the most oppressive tradition of feudalism — the *corvée*. After the war of 1733, the government, having resolved to take up the work of the regency on the public ways, opened new roads, repaired old ones, ordered works of art at the expense of the state, and authorised the intendants to levy upon the communities for men, carts, and horses for the work. This by no law, no decree of the courts, no act of government — they dared not brave the indignation of the people by a solemn proclamation of the infamous corvée. The enormous burden was cunningly imposed upon the parishes bordering the route by the intendants, who portioned it out according to their caprice; and imprisonment without record was the punishment of the least resistance, the slightest delay.

The result of all these abuses was the profound misery, a picture of which is left us by D'Argenson.[t] The years between 1738 and 1740 were most disastrous for the peasants. Under that ministry, cited by historians as a period of happy tranquillity, or at least of material well-being, "men died like flies from poverty and hard living" — and this during years of

comparative plenty (if we except 1740, a year of dearth throughout all Europe), and notwithstanding the apportionment of provisions by the government. The eastern and western provinces were the greatest sufferers; but the distress reached even to the Paris faubourg. On a day in September, 1739, when the king passed through the faubourg St. Victor on the way to his new palace of Choisy, the crowds saluted him not with the cry, "Long live the king!" but with the appeal, "Distress! Famine! Bread!" At the end of 1740 a rumour was current that the national fund had been diminished by one sixth; and D'Argenson affirms that "misery had slain more French in one year than all the wars of Louis XIV!" Allowing for some exaggeration on his part, the facts remain sufficiently dismal.

Cardinal Fleury had neither known nor cared to know how to employ for the good of France those intervals of peace and calm allowed her; he had lived from one day to the next, a selfish old man, desiring only to assure at any cost peace to his declining years. The woes of France, instead of healing, he had benumbed with sleeping draughts. He knew not even how to prolong that sleep until he himself should have entered into the eternal silence.[m]

An Ecclesiastic of the Court of Louis XV

THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION (1740-1748 A.D.)

Five years of peace had ensued for France. Her ardent abettors of war were satisfied. Not so those of similar temper in England, where national animosity was excited against the Spaniards on account of their commercial restrictions on the trade with South America, and of the cruelties with which they supported them. The same cry was raised against Walpole in one country as against Fleury in the other; and the English minister was driven into a war with Spain, as the latter had been compelled to hostilities against the emperor. The court of France became occupied in this interval with baser intrigues.

Louis XV hitherto had led a regular life attached to his queen, and his society was confined to a small knot of young courtiers, empty as himself, whom he admitted to partake of his *petits soupers* in the *petits appartements*. The monarch, in affecting the pettiness and privacy of humbler life, sought variety and escape from the dulness of grandeur. Even here, however, Louis was tenacious of his dignity; nor did he allow any political influence to those who partook of his convivial pleasures. One or two boy nobles had once indeed endeavoured to influence the king against Fleury. The monarch betrayed them to his minister, as Louis XIII might have done; but Fleury did not imitate Richelieu in his revenge. He merely sent the young conspirators away from court, stigmatising the plot sufficiently by calling it that of the *marmousets* or monkeys.

With the year 1740 opens a new scene for Europe: fresh personages start up; fresh interests absorb. The pacific humour of the last quarter of a century is universally scouted, and the appeal to arms heard and echoed on every side. Walpole is shaken from his seat; his congenial friend Fleury sinks into the grave. A hero appears on the throne of Prussia; and a princess, no less heroic and intrepid, supports and wins her right to succeed to Austria's wide dominion. One effect of this quarrel was to interrupt the amity that had now existed since the Peace of Utrecht betwixt France and England; the former eagerly grasping so favourable an opportunity for weakening the power of the empire, and England, already at war with Spain, flinging her support into the scale of Austria against the house of Bourbon.

Such is a summary view of the interests and jealousies in collision. The emperor Charles VI, to secure the Austrian succession to his daughter, Maria Theresa, issued a decree called the Pragmatic Sanction, which Spain, France, and England had stipulated to support. The emperor Charles died in October, 1740; and poor Maria Theresa, instead of finding the sovereigns of Europe true to their oaths and to her, found all, save England, rising in claims and hostilities against her.[1]

The First Silesian War (1740–1742 A.D.)

Prussia first put forth menaces. Frederick II, afterwards the Great, was but a few months on the throne. He now claimed Silesia as the price of his neutrality. The Austrian army, under Neuperg, opposed him; and Frederick fought his first battle at Mollwitz, in April, 1741. He was well-nigh routed. Towards the close of the day, however, the Prussians recovered confidence, and Schwerin, Frederick's lieutenant, won the battle, whilst the king was already far gone in retreat from the field.

France had waited to see the result of Frederick's invasion. Fleury's prudence reined in the ardour of the court; but, after the victory of Mollwitz, it was no longer possible to oppose the general wish to crush the house of Austria, and divide her possessions. The marshal Belle-Isle, who shared with the duke de Richelieu the personal favour of Louis XV, was the promoter of these councils. France instantly declared for the elector of Bavaria (later Charles VII), who aspired to the imperial crown. This prince was the son of him who, for his alliance with France, had been driven from his dominions after the battle of Blenheim. This new emperor — for the gold and the influence of France procured his election — was, however, to yield Silesia to Prussia; another share of the imperial territory to the elector of Saxony; while France was to preserve whatever she might conquer on the frontier of Flanders. With these aims the armies of France and Bavaria advanced without opposition along the Danube, occupying Passau and menacing Vienna; whilst Maria Theresa, crushed in all save spirit by so many foes, made that touching appeal, which is so well known, to her Hungarian subjects. Presenting herself with her infant son in their assembled diet, she first swore to respect their independence, and then demanded their aid, in tones that her beauty and her tears rendered more persuasive. The swords

[1 The struggle which ensued is known as the War of the Austrian Succession, and it lasted from 1740 to 1748. It has certain distinct subdivisions, however: the First Silesian War from 1740–1742; the Second Silesian War 1744–1745; the war in the American colonies is known as King George's War. The attempt of the Young Pretender in Scotland in 1745–1746 was really meant as a diversion of the attack on France.]

of the Hungarian nobles flashed in air as their acclamations replied, "We will die for our king, Maria Theresa!"[1]

The blunders of the French contributed even more than the zeal of her friends to raise the hopes of the Austrian princess. In the beginning of the century, Villars, with the old elector of Bavaria, had possessed the course of the Danube; the French marshal proposed to march on Vienna, an advice not followed. The present elector of Bavaria was now precisely in the same position; and the young count de Saxe [Maurice of Saxony] renewed the counsel of Villars. But the elector, or the emperor, for such he now was, was fearful lest he should be anticipated by some of his rivals in the conquest of Bohemia, and he accordingly marched with the French into that country. They met at first with success. Prague, the capital, was carried by surprise and assault, planned and executed by the count (afterwards marshal) de Saxe. Eger (Egra) was also taken. The French established themselves in Bohemia; but at the same time left Bavaria open to the Hungarians, by whom it was mercilessly ravaged.

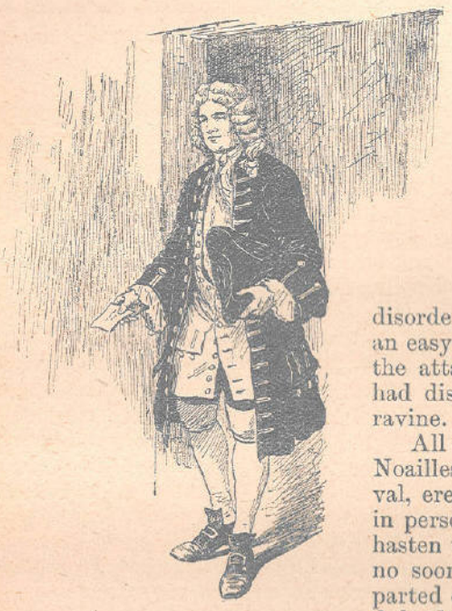
A near view and acquaintance with his allies had somewhat disgusted Frederick of Prussia. He, who was despotic in his armies, could augur little effective co-operation from such men as De Broglie, Belle-Isle, and the Bavarian emperor, each of whom had his plans and his views, one despising the talents of the other. Frederick, therefore, made peace with Maria Theresa, who was then glad to cede Silesia. The French were thus left to their own resources in Bohemia; where Prince Charles, commanding the Austrians, and relieved from the hostilities of Prussia, soon shut them in Prague. Marshal Maillebois was ordered to proceed to their succour with an army; but he not arriving, Belle-Isle was obliged to make his escape from Prague, and retreat with great celerity, though not without difficulty and loss, abandoning Bohemia and all his advantages.[2] The emperor Charles, driven even from his electorate of Bavaria, and now without an army, took refuge in Frankfort.

In the midst of these reverses, produced by a war that he had opposed, in January, 1743, died Cardinal Fleury, aged ninety years. He left no wealth, the noblest epitaph for the minister of a despotic government — for one who had succeeded Mazarin and Dubois; for one, too, who knew the value of economy, and who practised it for the good of the state. His political views, if not grand, were just. He was averse from breaking faith as to the Austrian succession; and was, perhaps, the only minister of his country whose aim was peace and internal prosperity, not external aggrandisement: but this his countrymen can never forgive him. They espy nought save want of spirit in his counsels; his friendship with England they construe into subserviency; and they principally censure him for allowing the French marine to fall into decay, as if peace was forever to continue with the maritime powers. There may be some truth in these reproaches. Fleury left the yearly revenue producing one hundred and eighty millions, and this without capitation, tenth, or onerous *taille*. The noblesse hated his parsimony as much as his pacific measures: war was the harvest in which they gleaned honours and employ.

[1 Since Hungarian law provided for no queen, Maria Theresa was called "King"; the cry was "*Moriamur pro rege nostro*." Some historians count this event apocryphal.]

[2 "The retreat of Belle-Isle was compared by his friends to that of Xenophon's Ten Thousand; but his enemies replied that Xenophon had saved his army, while Belle-Isle had lost the most of his." — SISMONDI.[a] It is said that of the 120,000 he took across the Rhine, he brought back hardly 35,000.]

Great Britain at length stepped forth to succour Austria in 1743. Her monarch proposed to imitate the famous march of Marlborough, to cross the Rhine, and, uniting with the imperialists, to force the French frontier of Lorraine and Alsace. The army [called the Pragmatic army], commanded by Lord Stair, and encouraged by the presence of its king, George II, and the duke of Cumberland, advanced to join the prince of Lorraine. The French, under the marshal De Noailles, were posted behind the Maine, the passages of which they preserved to prevent this junction. The river, before it reaches Frankfort, turns almost at right angles: the English imprudently marched along its right bank as far as Aschaffenburg, when they found that their enemies, in possession of the left, had it in their power to cross the river and cut off their supplies and reinforcements. It was necessary, therefore, to retrograde. They did so, and found their suspicions verified. The French had passed and occupied the village of Dettingen; the British were now under the necessity of attacking. The marshal De Noailles drew up his troops with a ravine in front, across which the English must advance, and in passing which they must necessarily be disordered, and become, on issuing from it, an easy conquest to their enemies ready for the attack. To make this sure, Noailles had disposed his cannon to play upon the ravine.



A FRENCH TRADESMAN IN THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV

All was ordered, when the marshal De Noailles resolved to make use of the interval, ere the English arrived, and proceed in person to the other side of the river to hasten the passage of the rest of the army; no sooner, however, had the general departed on this quest, than his nephew, the duke de Grammont, anxious to win without delay the honour of the victory,[1] broke through the orders of Noailles, and gave the word to pass the ravine. His troops obeyed, and thus the French found themselves in the very position in which Noailles had thought to place the English. Their cannon was useless, whilst that of the British opened with effect.

"They march, nevertheless," say the *Mémoires* of Noailles,[n] referring to his soldiers; "they endure a furious discharge of shot, which disorders their ranks. Three times they rally: the household troops charge with more valour than constancy or order; the English present strong, immovable masses, which send forth a continued murderous fire. In vain the duke of Chartres, now duke of Orleans, the count of Clermont, and the rest of the nobility, make the most prodigious efforts; there is no breaking the masses of the enemy: naught is left but retreat." Thus was lost the battle

[1 He wished, as did D'Harcourt, to win a marshal's staff. On account of their failure the French call the battle that of "the broken staves" (*journée des bâtons rompus*).]

of Dettingen by the French. They fled across the Maine; and more activity on the part of their victors might have destroyed the army. George II thought but of continuing his retreat. The French guards behaved very ill in this action, according to the despatch of their general; but their fault was more than redeemed by the valour of other regiments.

Since the death of Cardinal Fleury, Louis XV resided chiefly at Choisy. He affected to imitate his great predecessor, in being his own minister; but the business of state was carried on by Chavigny, Maurepas, the D'Argensons, and Cardinal Tencin. The greatest influence, however, was with the reigning mistress, the duchess de Châteauroux, sister of Madame de Mailly. She now emulated the conduct of Agnes Sorel, in inflaming the king's warlike ardour, and urging him to stimulate the French armies by his presence. Louis accordingly proceeded to Flanders to join the marshal De Noailles, whilst Voltaire was sent to Berlin in order to induce the king of Prussia to resume hostilities.[l]

Louis XV, according to traditionary custom, was praised as a hero and a conqueror, although his presence with the army merely embarrassed their operations, and made this expensive and useless war still more oppressive to the French people. A numerous court with all its appendages accompanied the king, which not only materially interfered with proper attention to the substantial necessities of the army, but furnished an opportunity for indulgence in those luxuries which daily augmented the misfortunes of the tax-paying people, and the insolence of those who were favoured by the court. The duchess de Châteauroux travelled like a queen, with a royal retinue: it was thought that some respect for public decency would be preserved, by her travelling alone and residing in a separate house; but notwithstanding this, she was everywhere received with the greatest outward demonstrations of respect, and before the king came, the magistracy of the respective towns where they took up temporary residence were obliged openly to break through or otherwise construct communications between the buildings occupied by the king and his mistress.

Louis himself was to command in the Netherlands, and made himself ridiculous by causing his armour to be proved by twenty musket-shots, and by requiring only 159 mules for the transport of his baggage, which was reduced, as it was said, to the smallest possible quantity. It was owing to no appreciation of his merit that Maurice of Saxony received the command of the army; Maurice, it is true, had proved in Bohemia and Bavaria that he alone of all the French generals knew how to cheer and animate the men, and was, in fact, born to be a commander; but he was not indebted to his military but to his courtly talents for his command, and to his being as great an adept in iniquity as the king himself. And withal it cost Châteauroux and Marshal de Noailles no small efforts to persuade the king, who was extraordinarily superstitious and brought up in the most slavish priestly principles, to intrust the chief command to the count whom he despised as a Huguenot, although he was a Lutheran. Maurice first served under Noailles, but afterwards he held the command alone, and in a short time, under the eyes of the king, he reduced all those towns which are called the barriers of Flanders.[f]

Prince Charles of Lorraine, taking advantage of the French retreat from Prague, and their defeat at Dettingen, penetrated into Alsace and punished France in her turn with invasion. Louis, on learning this, flew from Flanders towards the Rhine; he had reached Metz when a fever seized him, the consequence of fatigue and of intemperance. The monarch's illness speedily

became alarming; and some of the more pious courtiers penetrating to his bedside, in despite of the gay duke de Richelieu, reminded Louis of the evil of his ways. The duchess de Châteauroux had attended him in his journey, and was now at Metz. Remorse and repentance seized on the monarch; the unfortunate mistress was discarded, insulted, and, but for the pity of Richelieu, could scarcely have found the means of escape. The queen repaired to Metz, and Louis asked her to forgive him. The whole kingdom was, meanwhile, in emotion and anxiety for the monarch's safety: the story of his repentance touched his people, and never was a more fervent or pathetic display of loyalty; the nation seemed but to have one thought, one prayer[1]—it was for the recovery of their sovereign. "What have I done to be so beloved?" asked Louis.

Frederick of Prussia seemed to participate in this general admiration for the French king. He now came to his aid, invaded Bohemia, and, by his successes, recalled the imperialists from their invasion of Alsace. Frederick was in truth alarmed at the union of England, Holland, Sardinia, and Saxony with Maria Theresa; and he chose the present moment to fling himself into the opposite scale, knowing how it would entitle him to the gratitude of France. The declaration of hostilities by Frederick was chivalric, but unfortunate. Traun drove him from Bohemia with disgrace.

Louis in the meantime had returned to his capital. His first act was to recall his mistress, the duchess de Châteauroux, and to exile her enemies. But her triumph was short; death seized her ere she was well re-established in royal favour. In the commencement of 1745, the marriage of the dauphin with a princess of Spain was celebrated. It was at the fête given on this occasion that Louis first saw Madame d'Étioles, wife of a revenue contractor. She was of low origin, her family name being Poisson. She it was who, created marquise de Pompadour, had the address to retain for such a length of time her influence over the French king, and over the fate of Europe.

Second Silesian War (1744–1745 A.D.)

Charles VII, emperor, and elector of Bavaria, died about this time. France transferred her support to his son; but the young elector, warned by his father's misfortunes, concluded a separate peace with Maria Theresa, and abandoned his pretension to the empire, on condition of being restored to the tranquil possession of Bavaria. Maria Theresa, by this submission, was enabled to obtain the imperial crown for her husband, formerly duke of Lorraine, now grand duke of Tuscany and emperor.

France, by this defection, being rendered unable to carry the war beyond the Rhine, turned her efforts toward the Netherlands. A large army, commanded by Marshal Saxe[2] [Maréchal de Saxe] and honoured by the presence of both

[1 As a gauge of Louis XV's popularity, it is noteworthy that at this time 6,000 prayers were offered for him at Notre Dame; in 1757 only 600; in 1775 only 3.]

[2 Exhausted by dissipation of all kinds, Maurice left Paris in ill-health, but as early as the month of April he undertook the siege of Tournay. King Louis and his court now again joined the army and were engaged in balls and entertainments in Douai, when the allies adopted the unfortunate resolution of attacking the besiegers in their camp at Tournay. This led to an engagement, in which the marshal reckoned with such certainty on the victory that he sent a formal invitation to the king to be present at the battle. The engagement took place on the 11th, and received its name from the village of Fontenoy. Voltaire *p*, as is well known, has taken great pains to assign a great share in the victory to King Louis and his friend Richelieu, although he knew right well that the presence of the king and the companion of his love-adventures had only served to embarrass the commander-in-chief. The newspaper writers of these times were not conscious of the absurdity of the scenes between the French and English guards, which may be

king and dauphin, laid siege to Tournay [or Doornick]. The duke of Cumberland, who commanded an inferior force of English, Dutch, and Hanoverians, mustering little more than fifty thousand men, whilst the French numbered sixty-five thousand, marched to raise the siege. The remembrance of Dettingen, and a wish to rival Marlborough's victories, inspired him with this presumption.

Marshal Saxe advanced, leaving about fifteen thousand men to observe the siege, and took post at Fontenoy, his right wing resting on that village, his left in the wood of Barri, and his army drawn up in several lines across the interval. The duke of Cumberland advanced to give battle on the 11th of May, the prince of Waldeck, commanding the Dutch, on his left. The cannonade began, and its first victim was the duke of Grammont, the cause of the loss of Dettingen. The first attack was against Fontenoy, but the batteries thrice repulsed the assailants. The duke then despatched an officer to carry the wood of Barri; but there was no way of mastering either position. The English were thus exposed to the cross-fire from the right and left of the French. The duke of Cumberland resolved on the daring attempt to push on betwixt them towards the French centre. This he did, the entire force of the English infantry forming, as much from instinct and necessity as from order, into one solid mass or column. Unfortunately, neither the cavalry nor the Dutch could keep up with this attack, the interval between Fontenoy and the wood of Barri being so narrow that they must have fallen upon either of those two formidable positions. The columns of English therefore advanced alone, dragging their artillery: whole files were carried away as they passed between the French batteries; but, these passed, nothing could resist them.

A pause of politeness took place as the guards of the rival nations approached each other, it was said, in which salutations were made and returned, "Fire first, gentlemen of the French guards," cried the English officers. "Nay, fire you first, messieurs," replied their enemies. It came at last, and fatally. The French officers fell thick. Their lines were broken. Despite of the reputation of Marshal Saxe, and although he acted the part of an able general in his preparations for the battle, he was altogether wanting in its heat. His almost dying state—he was carried in a litter—might excuse this, but could not remedy it. The formidable column still advanced, the French charging it without effect in companies and squadrons. Saxe began to give orders for retreat. The king was already warned of his danger. The smallest aid of cavalry would at this moment have routed the panic-stricken French, and secured the victory to the English; but the duke was without that indispensable instrument of victory, whilst the cumbrous columns, for want of it, saw victory before them, but dared not break up their mass to snatch it. Seeing the immobility of the English, Lally, who commanded the Irish brigade, exclaimed, "Why not bring the cannon of the reserve to bear upon them?" The duke de Richelieu caught up the thought, repeated and insisted on it to the king.[1] Saxe approved. The few cannon, by enfilading the column, sufficed to scatter and make fearful breaches in it. The Irish brigade, composed of Catholic

read in the work of Voltaire; and the flattering historians who follow their authority edify the public with the affecting speeches which they put into the mouth of the king as he and the dauphin rode round the battle-field after the victory. In the accounts of these flattering sophists, a man without any sense of honour and shame like Louis, who commenced two bloody wars without any justifiable reason, who did despite to all principles of morality by his scandalous life and ruined the kingdom by his extravagance, is represented as a Christian philosopher *f*.]

[1 Historians incline now to discard all the anecdotes Voltaire *p* gives concerning this battle, especially this one which is blamed to a desire to give the duke de Richelieu an undeserved share in the victory. Dareste *q* charges this to "jealous intrigues to ravish Saxe's glory."]

exiles, rushed upon their English enemies. The French rallied and returned to the attack, and the almost victorious column, defeated in its turn, was obliged to trace back its perilous path in disorder, leaving the battle-field, dearly purchased, in the possession of the French.

The capture of Ghent, Bruges, Ostend, and Oudenarde followed the victory of Fontenoy. But it by no means relieved the king of Prussia, who, pressed by superior numbers, wrote to Louis that the French conquests in Flanders were as useless to him as if they had been won in China [or on the Scamander]. Frederick was piqued to see the armies of his ally strong and triumphant in Flanders and in Italy, where the king of Sardinia was beaten, and Milan taken by Marshal Maillebois, while the army on the Rhine was compelled, from its weakness, to act ingloriously on the defensive. The Prussian monarch expostulated against this kind of abandonment. Louis was affronted by the hero's frankness; and the friendship between France and Prussia subsided into coolness. Whilst the French ministry, therefore, turned their efforts to fit out the expedition which conveyed the Pretender to Scotland, Frederick concluded a treaty with England, and prepared to force Austria to grant him peace anew. He won a victory at Friedland. It was not sufficiently decisive. But the conquest of Saxony, and the entry of the Prussian monarch into Dresden, despite the menaces of Russia, humbled the proud tone of Maria Theresa. She made peace, ceding Silesia to Frederick, who acknowledged her husband as emperor (January 5th, 1746).

COURT DRESS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV

The early part of the campaign of 1746 was favourable to the French. The British were engaged at home against the Pretender; both Brussels and Antwerp surrendered to Marshal Saxe. The empress now, however, secure on the side of Prussia, made ample preparations, and despatched two armies, one under Prince Charles of Lorraine into Flanders, the other commanded by the prince of Lichtenstein to Italy. The latter, a young and talented commander, brought the united force of French and Spanish to action before Placentia [1] [or Piacenza] June 16th, 1746. The battle was long and hotly contested, and terminated in so total a defeat that the French were not only driven from the field, but obliged to evacuate the whole of Italy.

The Austrians in Flanders were far from turning the scale of victory so speedily. Prince Charles of Lorraine was attacked near Liège, between that town and Maestricht, by Marshal Saxe. He was defeated, and obliged to retire behind the Maas. This battle of Rocoux was said not to have been decisive: but Marshal Saxe was satisfied to have repulsed the fresh army of

[1 Dareste says that the Austrians had forty-five thousand men, and the French and Spanish only twenty-eight thousand, of which they lost more than a third, abandoning also their stores, their guns, and their wounded. He adds, "the disaster was complete, and, morally speaking, no less for France than for Spain." The abandonment of the unfortunate allies, the Genoese, was one of those stains which cannot be wiped out.]

THE YOUTHFUL MOZART AT THE COURT OF MADAME DE POMPADOUR
(From the painting by De Paredes)

Austrians, and retained his ample conquests of Flanders and Brabant. He had now advanced almost as far as Louis XIV, in his first memorable war. Holland was menaced in its vital territories. The isle of Zealand was threatened with invasion. The Dutch had recourse to the same measures which they had adopted in the preceding century. The prince of Orange was raised to sovereign power, and created hereditary stadholder. In the meantime the duke of Cumberland arrived from the field of Culloden, to defend the ally of England against Marshal Saxe. Immense armies on either side seemed to promise a decisive campaign. Maestricht and Bergen-op-Zoom were the only two fortresses that held out against the French. In manœuvring to besiege the former town, the French came in front of their enemies, advantageously posted at Lawfeld. It was now the turn of the duke of Cumberland to be entrenched and defended by cannon, whilst Marshal Saxe attacked in close column. It was the day of Fontenoy reversed.[1]

TAILLENDIER'S ACCOUNT OF LAWFELD (1747 A.D.)

Maurice of Saxony had returned to Brussels, March 31st, 1747, and tracing out a plan of campaign for his subordinates had taken possession of Dutch Flanders. Löwendal, Contades, Montmarin, able coadjutors in the plans of their chief, effected this conquest in the space of one month (15th of April to 16th of May). Everything was made ready for battle. The duke of Cumberland, at the head of an English army; the prince of Waldeck and Marshal Batthyányi at the head of the Austrians, wished to avenge Fontenoy and Rocoux; while Louis XV, full of confidence in the marshal's plans, was eager to share a second time the glory of a great victory. Perhaps this arose from a combination of state reasons and personal vanity. With regard to Marshal Saxe others than interested accusers thought that the marshal was not sorry to prolong the war. His wonderful manœuvres, eulogised by Frederick the Great, were a little too deliberate for French patience. The king thought that his presence would force on an engagement and give a definite success which would end the war. The battle took place on the 2nd of July, 1747, a battle resulting in triumphs for Maurice. That same evening the king announced the good news to the dauphin and instructing him to convey the good news to the dauphine wrote, "Tell her that our general was never so great, but blame must mingle with our praise in that he exposed himself like an ordinary grenadier."

Such, in effect, Maurice, the consummate general, had shown himself—an intrepid foot-soldier. He had seen from the opening of the action that the village of Lawfeld was the key to the battle and that once master there he would be master also of the enemy. The duke of Cumberland, either believing the place to be sufficiently strong, or not realising its importance, had placed only a small number of troops there. Warned suddenly of danger, he brought his whole army thither at the moment when the first brigade, directed by the count de Saxe, had taken possession of the village.

Our men [the French] recoil under the shock. A new column advances, which vainly tries to cut the allies to pieces and is in its turn repulsed. English, Hessians, Hanoverians, a whole army, a whole deep column concentrates behind Lawfeld and repairs incessantly the advanced ranks which fall before the French. It is the Fontenoy column over again, only more terrible, having its front protected by a natural stronghold. A road cut between two embankments fringed with hedges furnishes a formidable trench.

Maurice, afraid for a moment that he will lose the day, says to M. de Valfous, "Well, what do you think of this? We begin badly, the enemy holds well." "Monsieur le maréchal, you were dying at Fontenoy; you won: convalescent at Rocoux, you beat them again; your good health to-day shall crush them." It does, but the mêlée is awful. What a veritable furnace that village is—showers of stone and fire! For a moment the tumult ceases; neither gun nor musketry fire is heard. Our soldiers advance with fixed bayonets only. Just the noise of the charge—just the shock of the men meeting; the clash of arms; the fury of war going up in inarticulate cries from thousands of throats!

Maurice, sword in hand, rushes to the head of the king's regiment and takes the village in flank. On rush his men, striking and killing! The example of the chief kindles enthusiasm in every soldier there. What avail trumpets and drums? The drummers carry their drums on their backs, preferring sword play. Not a blow to waste, not a moment to lose. When we hold Lawfeld, the artillery for which we are cutting the road will soon blow Cumberland to pieces.

Here we have a unique glimpse of the count de Saxe and his marvellous charge, so very French, where the general and soldier were as one. "At that moment," he says, in his *Mémoires*,[r] "the enemy who were engaged in the village, hearing firing behind them, abandoned the hedges. Our troops attacked them at the other end and followed up. In an instant the whole outer part of the village was in our hands, taken amidst deafening shouts. The enemy's line was broken. Two brigades of artillery which had followed me opened fire and increased the disorder. Two cavalry brigades had come up on our left; I took two squadrons and ordered the marquis de Bellefonds, who was in command, to push on speedily to the enemy's infantry, and called to the horsemen: 'Seek your forage, my children'; and they did."

That foraging in the midst of the column which had incessantly reinforced the natural defences of Lawfeld made an enormous hole of two thousand paces in width in the English lines. "My two squadrons," adds Maurice, "were shot. Scarcely a man returned, but I had gained my object."

At what a price! For five hours the attack on the village lasted (from ten in the morning till three in the afternoon), and how many brave men on both sides had died in a purposeless war! What frightful slaughter, and doubly frightful, seeing it changed nothing in the political situation, and brought peace no nearer. In the English army ten thousand men bit the dust. We lost more than five thousand; and when that field of death was ours the twenty-seven thousand Austrians of Count Batthyányi, held in check by our left wing, retired peaceably upon Maestricht without losing a man or a cartridge. A serious mistake had been made, which Maurice realised later. There was a second victory to be achieved over Batthyányi after the defeat of Cumberland. Instead of re-uniting his victorious troops with those confronting the Austrians, and crushing an enemy inferior in numbers and already demoralised by the bloody reverse their comrades had received, Maurice committed an error by pausing to enjoy his triumph, by going to Herderen to receive the king's congratulations, so allowing Maria Theresa's general to withdraw in good order. But who will dare to blame him? Perhaps in charging as a common soldier at Lawfeld Maurice failed in his duty as general. But if this general in a decisive hour had not turned into the fiercest private soldier should we have conquered? In the intoxication of the struggle he had not foreseen probable results of the engagement.

A Frederick, a Napoleon would doubtless not have made this mistake. Yet the victory of Lawfeld, incomplete though it was, will ever be one of the most glorious memories of French infantry, and in the annals of Maurice de Saxe one of the most brilliant pages.[s]

OTHER AFFAIRS ON LAND AND SEA

The duke of Cumberland was worsted, but remained still strong enough to cover Maestricht. Marshal Saxe, unable to besiege this town, sent Löwendal to invest Bergen-op-Zoom, considered impregnable. It was nevertheless taken by assault, after a month's siege.

These successes in Flanders were compensated by reverses in Italy. Genoa, it is true, had risen in insurrection against the Austrians, and driven them out. Boufflers, and after him the duke de Richelieu, aided by the populace, were enabled to preserve the town. But to Genoa was limited their footing on Italian soil. The imperialists even penetrated into Provence. And when the chevalier de Belle-Isle attempted to force the passes of the Alps, he was defeated at Exilles, and slain, with the greater part of his soldiers. By sea, the French lost almost their last ship of war.[t]

Although a naval war had seemed imminent in 1740, it was postponed on account of the complications caused by the Austrian succession. For four years there were no naval hostilities between France and England. But from 1744, that is, from the date when war was officially declared, things went otherwise. The French troops received orders to be in readiness and began preparations accordingly, while the English on their side threatened the ports. The French possessed Cape Breton (Île Royale), a place doubly valuable, first because of the fisheries there, and secondly because it was the key to Canada and the American possessions. This was Louisburg. Since 1720, three million francs had been spent in fortifying it. The Anglo-Americans in Boston, jealous of its prosperity, and animated by a strong feeling of animosity against the French settlers, organised on their own account a small fleet to invade it in 1745, and asked London for help from the royal navy. The French colony was badly administered and full of disorder. Therefore, after only a fifty days' siege, the Anglo-Americans were victorious. The garrison surrendered, on condition that they and some two thousand inhabitants should be sent to a French port.

The conquerors, established at Louisburg, tried to enter Canada, but the governor, La Gallissonière, repulsed this attempt. They took, however, two richly cargoed ships belonging to the Company of the Indies (*Compagnie des Indes*); these, not having been warned in time, were sailing in fancied security by Cape Breton. Such losses naturally caused disgust and alarm in France. There was an outcry against an inefficient navy and the unreadiness of Maurepas, who commanded it. All were unanimous against the shortsighted economy of Cardinal Fleury. This was only the beginning of the reverses. A fleet equipped in 1746 to retake Louisburg, placed under the command of De la Rochefoucauld d'Enville, could not get to its destination. The corsairs captured several isolated ships, and commerce with the colonies was partly stopped. Sugar, coffee, and other colonial products, which had become almost necessary articles of daily consumption, went up enormously in price.

A bold plan was devised by the English, of destroying the establishments of the Company of the Indies at Lorient. General Sinclair disembarked the 1st of October, 1746, in Quimperlé Bay, marched on Lorient, and gave the

town twenty-four hours to surrender. But the governor, the troops, and the inhabitants put forward their best means of defence. So the English general, who could then succeed only by a surprise, was obliged to re-embark. It became necessary to escort the company's transports by squadrons of the royal marines. Twice in 1747 these fleets succumbed in an unequal fight with the more powerful English. On May 3rd, Admiral Anson, commanding twenty-seven ships, captured near Cape Finisterre, in Spain, a fleet of five vessels and two frigates. The Londoners showed their delight at seeing the ingots captured from the French ships by having bonfires. On the 14th of October, Admiral Hawke captured quite near to Belle-Île six vessels escorted by a convoy going from France to the Antilles. England conquered by her superior fleet. She had, according to Voltaire,[p] 130 ships, manned by 50 to 100 guns, with about 115 guns below. The French had only from 30 to 35 ships, with an inefficient naval force. Although this naval war was only accessory to the great struggle, and gave but a slight hint of the turn affairs would take, these numerous losses inspired fears that were only too well founded for the safety of the colonies. The maritime superiority of the British was a crushing revelation.

WARS IN INDIA

It is true, the French had better success in the East Indies. The English company had there four large settlements — Bombay, Madras, Fort William (near Calcutta), and Bencoolen. The French company had two, Pondicherry and Chandernagor, the latter a recent creation of Dupleix. It was considered best to try for a peaceful settlement, and Dupleix proposed neutrality to the English. But these, considering themselves stronger than they really were, summoned a fleet from the mother-country into Indian seas and took several French ships. Labourdonnais, governor of the isle of Bourbon (Réunion), and an officer in the navy, had for several years been warning the ministry that it was dangerous to leave the almost total direction of colonial affairs in the hands of the company; that a great national interest was at stake, India running the risk of becoming the prey of the English. By an order from the government he armed at the company's expense a small fleet of nine vessels, manned by some three thousand men, of whom eight hundred were natives.

On the 6th of July, 1746, he attacked and dispersed an English fleet. Then he appeared unexpectedly before Madras. It is reckoned that there were in the town about one hundred thousand people, but the only defence was a fort guarded by two hundred Europeans and a few sepoys. Labourdonnais had eleven hundred French troopers and a few hundred sepoys and blacks, without counting sailors and the marines. The English gave up the keys of Madras on condition of their being returned when an indemnity of 1,100,000 pagodes (estimated at 9,000,000 francs) had been paid. Thus was the taking of Louisburg revenged.

Dupleix protested against this capitulation. He maintained that in signing it Labourdonnais had exceeded his powers, and that the right of disposing of Indian conquests belonged only to the governor-general of Pondicherry. Labourdonnais resisted, saying he had given his word; that he had the right to conclude the treaty, and wished to submit the whole affair to a royal decision. But France was far distant. Dupleix, knowing himself to be the stronger party, broke the treaty, and destroyed the native quarters of Madras, which was really the most populous quarter and occupied wholly by Indians.

Labourdonnais later returned to France, where he was imprisoned in the Bastille on charges signed by the Council of Pondicherry under the direction of Dupleix. These pretended that he had betrayed the company's interests and sold Madras to the English. Dupleix next attempted to take Fort St. George. The enterprise was unsuccessful.

Then England sent out Admiral Boscawen, who, having rallied the scattered navy, found himself at the head of thirty men-of-war. Boscawen went to besiege Pondicherry. To do this he had to land his troops and set them at work with which they were ill acquainted. Dupleix armed the Indians, and was helped by a young and brilliant officer named Bussy, who was destined to become one of the greatest heroes of the Indian wars. Boscawen raised the siege after forty-eight days of incessant warfare. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, assured to France the possession of Pondicherry, and Louis XV recompensed the governor by giving him the order of St. Louis, although that was distinctly a military order. The Indian princes of the Carnatic, from seeing the victory over the English, conceived the highest idea of French military prowess. This was exactly what Dupleix wanted, for he proposed thereafter to trade on their fear and admiration.[q]

When peace was restored no sign of amity made its appearance between the rival merchants on the Coromandel coast. Dupleix sided with one of the princes of Arcot, replaced him on his throne, and was so carried away by security and ostentation, that he bought or forged the title of "viceroy of the Carnatic of the Great Mogul," and affected a greater magnificence than the native rulers. But India had not been without its elevating effect on the genius of the rival nation.

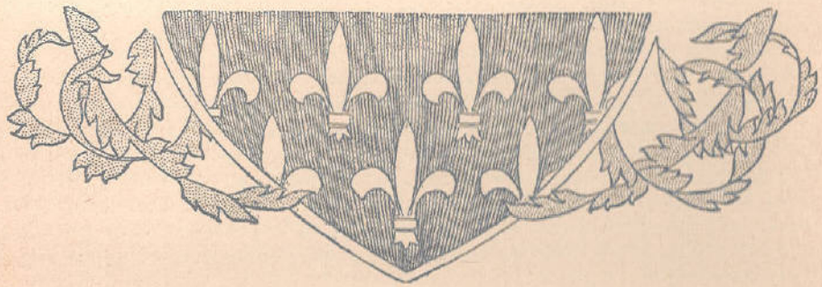
England saw the earlier services of Robert Clive, a merchant's clerk in a counting-house near Calcutta, at first with surprise and then with pride. He left his desk, and took the command in war with a self-reliant dignity which gave confidence to his companions. Step by step he followed the proceedings of Dupleix, and smote him hip and thigh at the siege of Madura, near Arcot. The native mind was subdued by the sight of a people who vanquished the French as easily as the French had scattered the Hindus; and court influence at home completed the misfortunes which English superiority had begun.

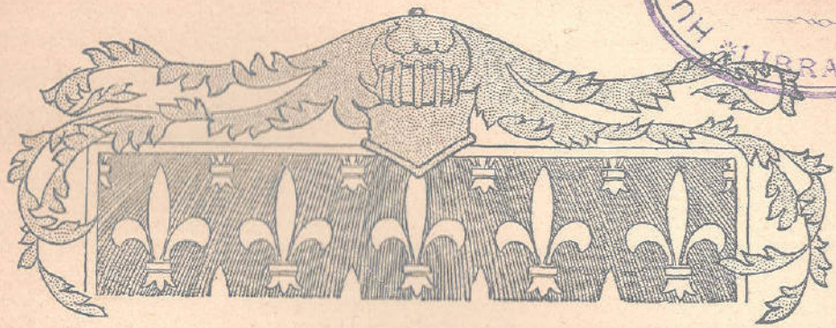
Dupleix was recalled, and, in spite of his title of marquis, was again looked upon as a book-keeper in a stall, and died of a broken heart in the effort to induce his judges to leave him some small portion of the great fortune he had at one time acquired. The count Lally, an Irishman by descent, was sent out to replace the plebeian Dupleix, and made matters a thousand times worse. He so offended the inhabitants of Pondicherry, which was a second time besieged by the English, that they almost prayed for the capture of the town and the disgrace of the commander. The capture came; and the commander, storming, cavilling, and finding fault with everybody but himself, was sent home, and, after some years' imprisonment in the Bastille, was executed as a traitor.

Labourdonnais, Dupleix, and Lally were the victims of French feeling in the matter of a colonial empire. Clive, on the other hand, was ennobled, Coote promoted, and honours and wealth showered on the bearers of the English flag. The issue of a contest in which the combatants were so differently treated by their employers was easily seen. And with India laid open to her powers, with immense squadrons blockading Toulon and Marseilles, and her Austrian allies ravaging Provence, England looked on with patience at the momentary triumphs of France in Italy and Flanders.

The apparent object of the war existed no more, for Francis of Tuscany, the husband of Maria Theresa, had been raised to the empire by an indisputable majority of the electors, including the vote of the versatile Frederick of Prussia, in 1746. The belligerents were further induced to a renewal of peace by the ominous appearance of a body of fifty thousand Russians, despatched by the empress Elizabeth to the aid of the Dutch. No one could tell what effect the swarms of an almost undiscovered desert would have on the future policies of the world; and it was thought wiser to prevent their first taste of the vintages of the Rhine, which might induce them to renew their visit, by an accommodation among all the states.

The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, October 18th, 1748, therefore, was hailed with great joy. It replaced everybody very nearly in the position held before the fight. England returned the greater part of her conquests, giving back Louisburg but keeping Acadia; Frederick, however, retained his prey of Silesia; and now that Maria Theresa was firmly established on her father's throne, and had procured the empire for her husband—Francis I—the powers and potentates of Europe had the unblushing effrontery once more to sign the Pragmatic Sanction, which they had been labouring for eight years to destroy.[i]





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CHAPTER II

"THE REGENCY OF POMPADOUR"[1]

[1748–1764 A.D.]

We have hitherto sailed down the stream of French history, from the obscure wilderness of its rise, through the rugged and picturesque gorges, the breaks and rapids of its middle course, to the wide majestic flow of the monarchy in its later days. Embarked upon its tide, with calm around and before, we now begin to perceive that the current grows suddenly more rapid, and that without any apparent or external cause we are hurried along with a swiftness at once menacing and unaccountable. Although not within hearing, we are yet within the influence of the distant cataract.

The very men who lived in those days began to perceive the movement; not only the philosopher and reflecting man, but Louis XV himself. "The monarchy is very old," said he, "but it will last my time"; a selfish remark, no doubt. But could he have stopped the current of its decline? And was not his conscious powerlessness, more than his selfishness, the prompter of his thought? His subjects, his compatriots, took precisely the same view; nor class nor individual knew whither they tended, but all were dissatisfied and ill at ease. A change was necessary, it was inevitable: the acts of everyone—of king, of priest, of minister, of noble, of parliament, of writer—all henceforth worked to bring about and hasten this change. The king degraded royalty by his dissoluteness, and weakened it by his profusion. The minister, turning away from the task of internal administration in disgust, directed his views abroad, and sought to gild his day of triumph by the trophies of a war, undertaken under some idle pretext of supporting the balance of power. The noble, like the monarch, degraded his order, and showed himself pressing on the lower classes, not for any public end, but for his own private gratification. The legists defended the cause of religious liberty and their own independence, indeed, but did so selfishly and blindly. The writer flattered royalty and aristocracy, and, at this price, was

[1 The phrase is Lacretelle's.[b]]

allowed to attack religion, the court finding itself in opposition to the priesthood. The priesthood itself increased its odium as a privileged class, by its intemperance, its ignorance, its absurdity, and its scandal.

In such a general abandonment of the ancient system, such a despair of supporting it, it is absurd to ascribe to any particular class the catastrophe in which the epoch ended. None set about revolutionising intentionally; but each stirred when it found its place irksome; each, where and how it had the power. As the noblesse had proved malcontent at one time, the magistracy at another, so now a new combination of society, the lettered class, rebelled with better success, for universal sympathy supported them; and step the first was taken in revolution.

It has already been stated that when all hostility against royal power ceased, the frowardness of opposition took refuge in Jansenism. This was in fact the second position taken up in France against sacerdotal tyranny: the first was Calvinism; its defeat has been recorded. And after it to resuscitate reform became impossible, because it must savour of Calvinism, which was hated as ignoble, as fanatical, as disloyal, and, above all, as past; for though zeal may innovate, it scorns mere imitation. Jansenism had not much more success: the base of its religious creed, at least, was narrow and sophistical; it suited legal heads, but was incomprehensible to the people. The third and last stand against papal supremacy was taken on the broad ground of infidelity; and the philosophers of the eighteenth century might plead that they were driven to this, as the last and only resource against the intolerance and tyranny of the priesthood.

The ecclesiastical power was, at the present epoch, the most prominent, the most felt; it was the vanguard of oppression. Not only was it guilty of those gross instances of injustice and crime, the breaking of Calas on the wheel, the execution of La Barre for pretended sacrilege,—enormities equal to those which sully the dark ages,—but it also wreaked its petty despotism in being the torment, the spy, and the bugbear of domestic and social life. Its arrogant pretensions, and absurd and fatuous conduct, disgusted the whole kingdom with the very name and institution of religion. It united the most odious attributes of the police and the censorship, and it peculiarly galled that rising and active intellect which characterised the society of the capital. That society combined the aristocracies of talent and of birth; it had now become the public—at least its representative.

Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D'Alembert, were far more the organs than the teachers of this society. In attacking the church they acted in self-defence, for that church was determined to allow them neither liberty of speech nor of writing; it presented itself as a wall against the advance of knowledge and of enlightenment. The heads of the church began the war and put the creed, which they professed and represented, to the same risk that their usurped tyranny incurred. To separate the cause of religion from that of Catholicism had been tried by Huguenot and Jansenist, and they had both failed: the sole and unfortunate alternative that remained was to attack religion itself, to confound creed and hierarchy. That alternative was embraced. Infidelity reared its standard: Voltaire poured forth his volumes; the *Encyclopædia* appeared; Diderot, D'Alembert, Condillac, formed new principles of mental science and moral conduct independent of religion. Novelty and the exigence of the moment gave them force. The philosophers conquered.

France was now governed by Madame de Pompadour. She was certainly a woman of talent. The empire which she held over Louis XV, long after

her charms had ceased to fascinate him, proves this. She bound him, as she says herself, "in the chains of habit." Her boudoir became the council-chamber, the ministers her creatures. The king was present at each determination, but was spared the trouble of either thinking or speaking. It was Pompadour who appointed generals and bishops, proposed laws and plans of campaigns. After a glorious victory, it is a complimentary letter from the mistress that we find coming to reward the triumph of the hero.[c]

This most charming young person, who seemed to have more than a fair share of talent and beauty, had but one defect, her birth. Fortune had done her a wrong in giving her as parents one Poisson, interested in the provisions market but driven by misfortunes into exile, and Madame Poisson, sister to the sieur De la Mothe, commissariat for Les Invalides; her gallantry had become proverbial. When Madame de Pompadour came into the world, her mother was the mistress of Lenormand de Tournehem, and he, considering himself responsible for the child, lavished sums upon her education. The child, even from girlhood, was surrounded by lovers, the most devout of whom was a nephew of M. Lenormand de Tournehem, named M. Lenormand d'Étioles, and a marriage had been soon arranged.[d]

THE CHARACTER OF POMPADOUR

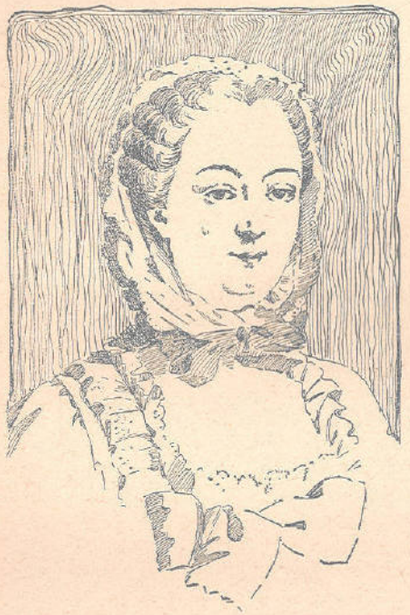
Mademoiselle Poisson, born of a bourgeois family, had married a rich financier, M. Lenormand d'Étioles; but she regarded the marriage only as a matter of form, and set out deliberately to become the king's mistress. She was deemed one of the prettiest women in Paris; she dressed magnificently, and had luxurious and disordered tastes; she possessed a calculating spirit, an inordinate persistence, self-possession, remarkable histrionic capabilities; she lacked all moral sense and was without the ghost of an opinion. She was known as "the most Parisian of the Parisiennes"; and considered the title a compliment.

She was a finished specimen of the parasitic type, covered with gold and mounted on a pedestal. A practical comedienne, she possessed in their perfection the qualities native to her rôle—finesse and intrigue, greed, selfishness, impudence; she remained always mistress of herself, and was incapable of genuine enthusiasm. Guided by the counsels of a shameless and ambitious mother, she had herself presented at court; in a few weeks she had won for herself the place made vacant by the death of Madame de Châteauroux. She attached herself to the king, conquering him through his weaknesses and by subtle flattery. In April, 1745, she took up her quarters at Versailles in the apartments of Madame de Mailly. Louis declared her his acknowledged mistress; shortly afterwards he presented her with the marquisate of Pompadour, and, breaking for her all his rules of economy, spent money with a lavish hand.

The Marquise, as she was thenceforth called, eager for pleasure, for diversion, for luxury, monopolised the king—idle, sad, morose, "of all men in the kingdom," says De Carné,[e] "the most bored"—and plunged him into a whirl of ruinous amusements. She was graceful, vivacious, full of animal spirits; she painted, cut cameos, danced, sang, played comedy, and was mistress of all the arts of seduction. Education, says D'Argenson,[f] had assisted nature in perfecting her in her chosen rôle. "She is an odalisque," he adds, "smartly tricked out—an able superintendent over his majesty's pleasures." "She presides over the amusements," says D'Angerville,[g] a biographer of Louis XV; "it is her vocation, and she fills it with taste and address."

She organised a small theatre, the actors being the king's associates. Concerts were given there, music being the rage, as well as operas, ballets, and comedies; Madame de Pompadour being always leading lady and most able actress. A privileged number only were admitted to these spectacles, and an invitation was considered a signal favour. This theatre was looked upon as a second king's-closet. Into the intimacy of this butterfly existence she drew some men of intellect, of letters, of art, who looked upon art and letters only as fashionable diversions. Thus did she succeed in amusing, stupefying, and subjugating Louis XV.[h]

When Madame de Pompadour became the mistress of Louis XV, she filled his whole existence. His every hour was taken up by her. The days, hitherto monotonous, now sped away. A thousand pleasures were devised by her to rid him of that eternity of ennui which used to intervene between sunrise and sunset. She never allowed him to relax into his old moodiness and even stirred him to work. Yet often would she draw him away from the thoughts of ministerial disputes, ambassadorial intrigues, and the cares of a kingdom.



MME. DE POMPADOUR

These childish ways and delicious teasings could only become one such as herself. But sometimes she would sing as she only could; would make the clavecin give forth its sweetest airs, or, like a Scheherazade, would smooth the wrinkles from the king's brow with some piquant story. Louis XV, body and soul, was carried along with his favourite in a devilish enchantment of restless, never-ending pursuit after pleasure.[d]

Great as was the art this woman displayed in keeping this worse than useless ruler from the tragedy of yawning, the nation at large was suffering worse than boredom before the appalling cost of the royal pleasantries. But her ambitions took a yet higher flight, and she assumes a permanent place in æsthetic as well as social and political history.[a]

THE INFLUENCE OF POMPADOUR ON ART

Together with a love of display, she exhibited an inordinate fondness for fine buildings. She kept the king busy with construction, interior decoration, and furniture. She expended fabulous sums at Trianon, at Choisy, at Fontainebleau; as well as on her two retreats at Crécy and Bellevue, constructed on an entirely different plan from the royal palaces. Disregarding the noble majesty of these edifices, she revelled in subtle elegancies, capricious frivolities, costly fantasies. She here exhibited all the inventions, all the possibilities of luxury; and accumulated rare and priceless objects. The artistic followed the social decadence; nobility was sacrificed to grace, even to affectation.

With Madame de Pompadour art degenerated to that tortuous and mannered elegance to which her name is attached. Watteau and Vanloo gave place to Boucher; salons became boudoirs. Painting, sculpture, even the engravings which vulgarised the works of the masters had for aim and end interior decoration. Furnishings were multiplied, in various and elaborate forms. Dress was richer, more ornate, more fantastic; stuffs were more various, thanks to the products of India and China. Originality and caprice were the idols of the hour. The marquise, realising that therein lay her hold on the throne, loved to hear proclamations of the advance she had given the arts; she prided herself upon being the one who maintained the magnificence of the court. Her influence extended even to other countries, above all to the petty German courts, accustomed to model themselves upon the court at Versailles.

Her only creation was an industry of luxury — that of porcelain. Saxony had a celebrated factory, the products of which were famous throughout Europe. The marquise desired to establish a similar one in France, partly from caprice or for amusement, partly, it was said, to release the country from the duty on imported porcelain. Workshops were established at Vincennes, and the royal manufactory at Sèvres was organised and set working in 1756. From the artistic point of view this new enterprise achieved a high degree of perfection; but as an industry it could thrive only by means of large gifts from the king and enormous orders which created a new source for public expenditure.

FRENCH NOBLEMAN, MIDDLE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

For these caprices of his favourite, the cold and emotionless Louis evinced a complaisance that could not fail to amaze his associates. He promptly lost the little energy remaining to him, yielding altogether to the enervation of an idle and sensual life. All illusion concerning him was dissipated. To absence of talent, says D'Argenson,[f] he joined utter lack of dignity. The spectacles and the fine buildings of the marquise became for him the first affairs of state — those alone, at least, with which he could occupy himself without fatigue and without repugnance. He became accustomed to living with her in a state of continual trotting about, travelling from one house to another, and stopping but a few days; everywhere dragging the enormous train of the royal household, with regard neither to the tremendous expense of these "little journeys," nor to the inconvenience resulting in the conduct of the government.

History has never satisfactorily estimated the figures reached by expenditures in these "minor pleasures" (*menus plaisirs*) — expenditures made blindly, without calculation, and regulated only after the lapse of years. Contemporaries estimate the expenses of the king's household at double the cost of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and subsequent calculations prove that this is no exaggeration. The opening of the château at Bellevue, November 25th, 1750, was the occasion of the presentation to each guest of a costume of purple cloth embroidered with gold, valued at

[1750–1753 A.D.]

1,100 livres [£45 sterling]. The profusion of individual gifts was one of the natural consequences of a luxury for which even the largest fortunes were insufficient. Not content with acquiring an enormous individual fortune, Madame de Pompadour threw money away without counting it. She became, as it was said, the canal for the royal favours, administering the royal benefits with an audacity which served her well, since she thus gained partisans for herself.

Of the state she disposed as she disposed of the king. Towards France and the government she took the attitude of conqueror and parvenue. She had but one aim — to enchain Louis, to reign at Versailles by intrigue. She subjected the ministers little by little to her will, less for the desire to reign than to maintain her position. In the state she saw herself — herself alone. The king of Prussia gave her her true name — *Cotillon I* (Petticoat the First).

By a contrast easy enough of explanation, it came about that this scandal divided the court and produced a reaction. While the favourite surrounded herself with a society of ambitious pleasure-seekers, the royal family took refuge in a life of exemplary regularity. The queen, it is true, counted for little, but the dauphin was remarkable for his habits of austerity. The daughters of Louis, of whom only the eldest, the infanta of Parma, was married, came each in turn from the abbey of Fontevrault, where they were all educated, to take up a life of edifying piety at Versailles. The duke of Orleans, son of the regent and first prince of the blood, had taken up the life of devotion; he retired to the abbey of Ste. Geneviève, and died there after writing some books on theology.

Unhappily the religious party remained always mediocre, with small measure of activity or enlightenment. All their opposition degenerated into paltry bickering. The queen was a cipher, and the princesses were covetous as children: at the least sign of discontent among them the king and the marquise appeased them with foolish gifts.

Satirical songs were current at Versailles; it was not long ere they were repeated in Paris. Lampoons floated about whose authors were not discoverable. In them the marquise was treated of as a woman of obscure origin who had wished only for peace — peace at any price, fearing the end of her reign would result if the king returned to the army. "All are vile — ministers as well as mistresses," finished one tirade. The audacity of these attacks at first created only astonishment; the populace seemed to feel the danger of allowing their sovereign to be criticised. But this interval was short. The enormously increasing expenditures, the new duties imposed, the more and more unmistakable weakness of the government succeeded finally so well in alienating the minds of all that a former minister at last dared to write in his secret journal the new word — Revolution![h]

THE PARC-AUX-CERFS; COURT DEGENERACY

Madame de Pompadour was sufficiently acquainted with the king to know that his absurd attitude toward women of all ages could not be combated. While her jealousy was ever vigilant in the case of those who she feared might supplant her in intellect or in conversation, she willingly introduced into his presence others from whom she believed she had nothing to fear. The Marquis of Lugeac, the nephew of Madame de Pompadour, and Lebel, the king's valet, were the chief of those who encouraged Louis XV in his follies and crimes, and

[1753–1768 A.D.]

even the Chief of Police lent them his support. Young girls, whose appearance attracted the attention of the police spies, were stolen away from their mothers by various artifices, taken to Versailles, and shut up in the most isolated and inaccessible apartments of the palace.

In these apartments the king passed many an hour amusing himself by criticising their appearance in the court dresses which it was his delight to lavish upon his slaves. At times he would set them writing exercises, until many of them developed a handwriting exactly like his own. He was particularly careful to instruct them in all their religious duties; he only used the most pious language in their presence; he would even join them at their prayers, and no thought of the future for which they were destined interfered with his care for their religious and social education.

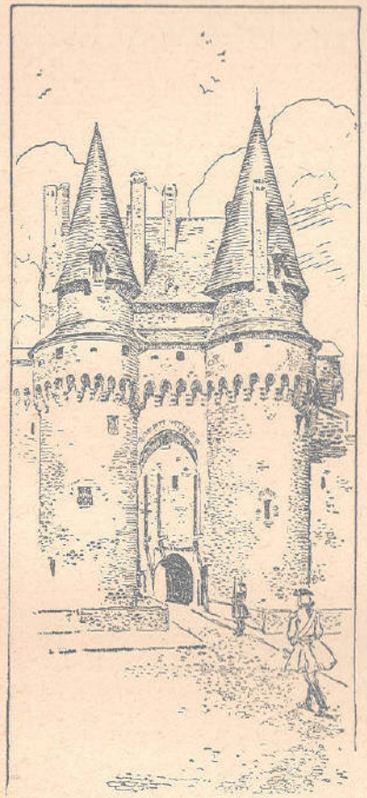
Madame de Pompadour, although she knew all that the king did, and knew even that—strangely enough—he interested himself improving the minds of the young girls to whom his favour was in other respects disastrous, pretended to see nothing of the king's manner of life. She presented him, about 1753, with the charming retreat of The Hermitage, in the park of Versailles, on the road to St. Germain. The building and the surrounding gardens had been constructed and planted for her in the most magnificent style, at the expense of the royal treasury; she pretended to be weary of it, wishing to give the king an opportunity of concealing his weakness from the commonage. Soon several splendid mansions were erected in an enclosure called the Parc-aux-Cerfs. They were for the reception of those who were awaiting the pleasure of their master. These were cared for during confinement, but their children were always taken from them, and placed in religious houses; they never again saw their mothers, who, on their side, never again saw the king. The number of unfortunates admitted to the Parc-aux-Cerfs was enormous; on their departure they were married to knaves or fools, to whom they brought a comfortable dot. Some among them received very considerate treatment. "The expenses of the Parc-aux-Cerfs," says Lacretelle,[b] "were paid in ready money. It would be difficult to compute them; but there can be no exaggeration in saying that they cost the state over 100,000,000 francs [or £4,000,000 sterling]. Some statements, probably libellous, estimate them at one thousand million."

But it was not only his debaucheries which rendered Louis XV incapable of accomplishing his kingly duties; through the whole of his life ran the current of that indolent egotism which made him shrink from all intellectual effort, and upon which his soul floated from distraction to distraction. Madame Campan[i] pictures his intimate life, at a much later epoch it is true, but his habits do not seem to have changed during the interval: "The king," she says, "thought of nothing but the chase."

The moral laxity thus paraded at court with an effrontery unequalled in the preceding century did not fail of its effect on the courtiers; and these followed readily in the footsteps of their master, contributing their quota to the alienation of the nation from the government. Not only did they indulge themselves in every coarse form of pleasure, but they gloried in the notoriety their manner of life brought to them. Vanity was the spur; and so highly did the sycophants value their evil reputation, that even the fair fame of the most virtuous women was not safe from them. One of the favourite artifices of the Duke de Richelieu was to order several of his carriages to be stationed in localities where he was not even known, in order that the impression might be given that he was visiting in those parts in the prosecution of his lawless gallantries. The number of families in Paris whose peace was troubled and whose fame was blasted by

the irregularities of the king and his courtiers was enormous; but the inevitable scandal earned for the court more enemies than direct offences. Those whom the people should have been able to honour strove only to render themselves dishonourable; and since the authorities made the protection of vice their chief business, society was rapidly approaching dissolution.[j]

The only star in this dark and dishonourable age, the much-lauded hero of the War of Succession, the dissolute son of the gallant king Augustus, Maurice of Saxony, stood no higher in the scale of morality than Richelieu himself. He could read with some difficulty, but had never learned to write correctly. Like the knights of the Middle Ages and the distinguished persons of his own, Maurice regarded ignorance as the privilege of his rank, but he was possessed of sound common sense enough to decline the ridiculous honours which the academy offered to confer upon him. The marshal's ignorance injured no one; but the example which he set and his immoralities must, for many reasons, have produced the very worst effects, because the king lived in the same manner that he did, and because the laws and the usages of that time allowed both to employ the unlimited power of the police intrusted to the government for the gratification of their meanest passions.



A Gateway of a French Chateau

The king and Pompadour, as is well known, filled the state-prisons with persons whose only fault was the having written, repeated, read, or circulated verses or pasquinades directed against their persons or mode of life, and whoever failed in the slightest degree in any outward observance of respect towards any of those dissolute gentlemen by whom the king was surrounded, was cast into prison without hesitation and without trial. Even the flattering Marmontel, who had been lavish in his praises of Pompadour, did not escape this fate, having repeated in society some verses which were written against the duke d'Aumale, and refusing to betray their author. Marmontel,[k] in his memoirs, gives such a full and detailed account of the circumstances, that the melancholy condition of the morals of the higher classes and of the government may be clearly deduced from his writings alone. Count Maurepas, an old fop, who was afterwards unfortunately appointed mentor to Louis XVI, was at that time minister of marine and conducted the business of his department with ability; he was dismissed from court, sent to his estates, and an incapable minister appointed in his stead, because he was suspected of having been the author of some verses which were found under Pompadour's plate.

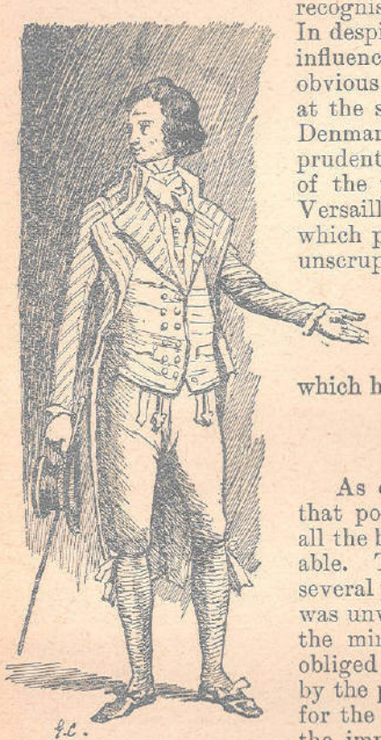
Marshal Saxe, who possessed unlimited power, adopted the most arbitrary measures to gratify his resentments against those favourites who proved faithless to him, whose number was far from small, and against those who supplanted him in the favour of the mistresses who wished or endeavoured to escape from his importunities. In the Low Countries the marshal ventured to practise extortions, which exceeded all bounds and excited the indignation of everyone. This went so far that Noailles had great difficulty in restraining him from fitting up privateers at his own cost, to be employed against Holland, and from turning a regular pirate, when war had not even been declared against the Dutch. Loaded with presents, and enriched in every way, he was nevertheless continually in difficulties for want of money, and what he so cruelly and scandalously extorted from those who fell into his power, he most lavishly spent in the gratification of the lowest and most degrading passions. When we examine more closely the social and inward life of many of the English aristocracy of what was called the fashionable world, or the lives of Marshal de Saxe, Richelieu, and Louis XV, we can well comprehend the cruelties and enormities of the Revolution, of which the masses were the mere instruments, while the real originators were adepts in that distinguished wisdom which Lord Byron preached.

The whole public was in a state of ecstasy, and thought it an admirable device when the actress De Metz, in the character of the goddess of victory, placed a crown of laurels on the head of the victorious Saxe, in his box in the theatre, upon his return to Paris from his successful and glorious campaign. All was mere empty appearance; life was a comedy for the nobles and a tragedy for the people. The public voice applauded the erection of a Parisian stage in the camp, and considered the idea of causing balls, dancing, operas, and plays to be mixed up and to alternate with bloody scenes of strife, as incomparable and delightful; whilst the degraded flatterers of the press conducted the king and the dauphin around the battle-field, strewed with the bodies of the slain, in affecting conversation. French historians are not ashamed even at the present day to record and boast of a contemptible witticism of Marshal Saxe, which one could scarcely pardon in a common mountebank. An actress named Favart, who was especially favoured by the marshal, when she came forward to announce the subject of the next representation on the evening before the battle of Rocoux, was obliged to use the following disgraceful language, which was then regarded and is yet recorded as a piece of admirable wit: "To-morrow there will be no representation on account of the battle, but on the day after to-morrow we shall have the honour to represent," etc.

No actress who attempted to escape him was safe from immediate and arbitrary arrest. A most notorious and detestable example of his conduct in this respect occurred very shortly before his death, when his health was ruined by his excesses, and he was confined to bed dangerously ill in his castle of Chambord.

The old marshal De Noailles saw, indeed, that everything was going wrong and did not hesitate to express his opinion, for which he was removed from office and power; but he was also restored to his former station only by the influence of Châteauroux. He was more of a courtier than a statesman, countenanced every description of abuse, demanded offices of profit and honour for his relatives to the third and fourth degree, and continued to engage in incessant intrigues, whilst in his letters to the king he was constantly playing the mentor and complaining of cabals. The king himself was distrustful of his ministers, and listened with much greater attention

and eagerness to those family anecdotes and scandals which were daily reported to him by his lieutenant of police, and which were the fruits of letters secretly opened, than to the most important matters of business. Louis listened to the advice sometimes of one and sometimes of another of his courtiers, kept secret diplomatic agents in every place, whose business it often was to foil and counteract the purposes of those who were publicly recognised as the ambassadors of his government. In despite, however, of the police and prisons, the influence of public opinion became every day more obvious and important. The most intelligent and at the same time the most absolute monarchs of Denmark and Prussia, and Catherine of Russia, prudently made terms with the French organs of the prevailing opinions, whilst the court of Versailles alone despised them. The contempt in which public opinion was held was shown in the unscrupulous and cruel treatment of the unfortunate Charles Edward for the sake of pleasing the English. By their severity the government awakened a degree of general sympathy for him and his cause which he by no means deserved.



CITIZEN'S COSTUME, END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

FINANCIAL DISTRESSES

As early as October, 1747, the destitution of that portion of the people who at that time bore all the burthens of the state had become insupportable. The farmers of the public taxes had paid several years in advance; every private person who was unwilling to send his gold or silver plate to the mint, or wished to lay up hard cash, was obliged to have his plate or precious metals stamped by the proper authorities, and to pay a heavy tax for the privilege. Such a tax as this, as well as the impost which was laid upon jewels, could at least affect the rich only; but taxes and duties were speedily laid upon all the necessaries of life. All sorts of goods and provisions which were brought into Paris were in future to pay a sixth part more than they had previously done (four sous a pound), and the duke of Orleans, by his earnest representations of the evil consequences, had great difficulty in persuading them to except bread and flour from this increased taxation.

All these methods of raising money however proved insufficient; the court was in want of supplies; their diplomatic efforts were checked and limited, whilst the war continued, and trade was completely paralysed; recourse was then had to the most disgraceful means: 1,200,000 livres were raised by the sale of annuities: next, to a lottery, in order to bring 30,000,000 livres[1] into the treasury; and the Company of the Indies, which at that time farmed the royal monopoly of tobacco, was obliged to advance 10,000,000 livres. When the expenditure of the court, and the payments

[1 It should be remembered that the livre of that time was about the same as the franc of the present day though its purchasing value was higher.]

which were made to Swedish nobles and men in power and to German princes, or the vast expenditure of their various embassies, are compared with the small sums which could be borrowed or extorted by such means, it will readily be seen, that Noailles was right when he conjured the king in 1745 not to suffer himself to be deceived by the appearance of prosperity and abundance among certain classes of the people, but to be persuaded that the misery of the mass of the nation was beyond expression.

The only persons in power who assumed the appearance of advocating the cause of the people, was the parliament; but this body, in the mode and spirit of their representations in opposition to the royal decrees of 1748, showed very clearly what sort of protection the people were to expect from an assembly of opulent lawyers and nobles.

In order to bring money into the treasury, and to extricate himself from the perplexities with which he was surrounded without injuring the privileged classes, it occurred to the minister of finance in March, 1748, to lay a tax upon certain kinds of real estates, and to deduct a percentage from all chattels which were transferred as presents, or bequeathed by collateral relations or strangers in blood; in addition to this, he endeavoured to increase the duty upon bills of exchange and articles of merchandise, and to lay a new tax upon powder, wax, silk, and paper. The parliament protested very vigorously against these threatened impositions, and took the part of those upon whom it was intended they should be laid; but at the same time they protested no less vehemently against another royal decree, which was intended to protect the interests of the frugal and industrious citizens against the extravagant nobility, who were overwhelmed with debts, and who conducted themselves with insolence, relying upon the inalienability of their estates. The government published a decree, that if a man possessed of real estates contracted and failed to pay his debts, his estates should be sold, and be transferred with all the rights and privileges thereto belonging to the purchaser. The parliament complained much more vehemently against this meditated change than against the imposition of the new taxes, which, notwithstanding all their complaints, were actually laid upon the people. Extravagance however increased rather than diminished; immense sums were lavished upon foreign courtiers and princes, as we shall show in the history of the Seven Years' War. Accounts of the expenditure of the court, and of the sums which were squandered by Belle-Isle, are to be found in all the numerous memoirs of that period; in this place we shall merely subjoin some examples of the behaviour of the generals and men in power selected from papers in the state archives.

It clearly appears from the autograph correspondence carried on between the two ministers of foreign affairs, D'Argenson and his successor Puysieux and Richelieu, that the last-mentioned was rewarded with the dignity of a marshal in return for the grossest deceptions. The Spaniards did nothing for Genoa, the French paid immense sums; but the shameless favourite of the king, without any scruple or self-reproach, used the money for his own personal ends. The affairs of the army were entirely neglected, and disorder prevailed: Humada, the commander of the Spanish troops in Genoa, would not submit to serve under Richelieu, and did not understand a word of French; the French officers conducted themselves as they had previously done in Bavaria under Broglie; they left the army in crowds during the winter and betook themselves to Paris, without any permission from the commander-in-chief. Richelieu, under the then existing constitution, found it impossible to prevent this practice; but again, the minister, with good

reason, reproaches him with a lavish expenditure of the public money, which had proceeded to an extent no longer tolerable. The minister writes, that, in such a climate as that of Genoa, such immense sums were expended for fire-wood, that a maréchal-de-camp received 16 livres for that article alone, and all the other officers in proportion. It may be proved indeed from the marshal's own letters, that he made the most shameful use of the large subsidies which were intrusted to his control; and from the minister's correspondence with the marshal, a correct idea may be formed of the extent to which the court and ministry at that time were in the power of the nobles, favourites, and officials of the king, and of the manner in which they were obliged to fawn and cringe, if they wished to retain their servile appointments.

The minister of foreign affairs excuses his own interference, and remarks on these points, by humbly pleading that the minister of finance (*contrôleur-général*) made heavy complaints of the immense amount of the extraordinary and secret expenditure of the army in Genoa, and in order not to lose the favour of this most gracious favourite, he is contemptible enough in an *official* letter to appeal to the king's mistress. The same minister afterwards threatens a M. Farconet with perpetual imprisonment, for attempting, by means of Richelieu, to negotiate a marriage between the king's sister and the king of Sardinia, and denounces him for daring to interfere with affairs that belonged to his ministerial department alone. To judge from his letters, Puysieux seems to rejoice at the embarrassments of his colleague the minister of finance, but admits indeed that he had already sent 6,000,000 livres, and afterwards three bills for 632,500 livres to Genoa, and that notwithstanding all this, the treasury then was completely exhausted.

In order to form some opinion not only of the indifference but of the contempt with which public opinion was at that time treated by the court, it is necessary only to recall to the minds of our readers, the incredible expense of the king and his court. At the very time in which the precious metals were taken from the people at large by force, and the hoarded farthings of the citizens were extorted by the imposition of a stamp-duty, the expenditure of the royal silver chambers and of *Menus plaisirs*, under the administration of a Richelieu, D'Aumont, and Gesvres, amounted yearly to many millions. This will be most clearly shown by the documents referred to in one of the papers contained in a bundle in Carton K. 150, of the "Archives du Royaume." It is one upon the *États de la dépense d'argenterie et menus plaisirs* of the years 1745–1748. It is there stated, that under Richelieu, in the year 1745, it amounted to the enormous sum of 2,842,097 livres! the *campagne du roi* inclusive. In the year 1746, under the duke d'Aumont, it reached 1,992,801; but it is added, "It was *moins forte* than in 1745, on account of the dauphin's marriage." Then in 1747, under the duke de Gesvres, 2,809,523; and finally, in the year 1748, it only amounted to 1,327,099.[t]

RELIGIOUS DISPUTES

And yet for all her unspeakable evils, the Pompadour, unlike most royal mistresses, put something also in the other scale, and the Rev. James White could say of her at this time, "The principal personage who rose in defence of the national liberty and the purity of society was Madame de Pompadour." This was in connection with the quarrels of the Jesuits.[a]

La Pompadour, in her connection with the philosophers, naturally adopted their prominent ideas. These, as we have seen, were directed against the

church. Accordingly, in 1749 appeared the edict of *mainmorte*, forbidding any new conventual establishments without royal permission; also incapacitating them from inheriting or acquiring any increase of territory. This law, taken by the learned from the English statute-book, was indeed called for at a time that the church possessed more than one-third of the entire landed property of the kingdom. The royal tenth, called afterwards a twentieth, had begun to be levied during the war, and was now continued upon the privileged classes. The clergy made a stubborn resistance to the tax.

Unfortunately, at this critical period, a prelate, of tenacious character and narrow intellect, was promoted to the important post of archbishop of Paris. In Christophe de Beaumont the Jesuits immediately found a stay and a firm support; and under the shadow of his power, and the instrumentality of his arm, they soon began a crusade against conscience. It was against the latent and almost extinct sect of Jansenism that Christophe de Beaumont directed his blows. He invented billets of confessions, which each person was obliged to take out from an orthodox ecclesiastic, swearing, at the same time, belief and submission to the bull *Unigenitus*. The archbishop ordered that no person unprovided with one of those billets of confession should receive the sacraments or consolations of religion, or should be entitled to Christian burial. The consequence was, that some of the most pious inhabitants of the capital died without communicating, and were refused burial. Amongst them was the duke of Orleans, the devout son of the regent. His rank procured him burial, and previous absolution; but the almoner who was thus guilty of disobedience was excommunicated.

These facts, that one might imagine to be taken from an ironical tale of Swift, are actual events of the eighteenth century. The parliament intervened in behalf of common sense and justice, and decreed that the bull *Unigenitus* was no article of faith. The archbishop was obstinate. The priests resisted; and the altar, with the Lord's Supper, awaiting communicants, was become universally the scene of scandal, of quarrel, of anathema, opposition, and abuse. These scenes were repeated through the whole kingdom; the dead remaining unburied, the mysteries of religion profaned; whilst the Jesuits, in addition to these acts of violence, recurred also to the weapons of the impious, and represented the Jansenists in farces and in caricatures.[1]

At length the quarrel between the ecclesiastical and judicial powers reached a point at which one or other must succumb. The trick of a minister, D'Argenson, turned the court against the parliaments. A sick nun was refused the sacraments by a curate. The parliament condemned the latter. The archbishop interfered, and was condemned too. D'Argenson then came, and carried off the Jansenist nun, who was still alive, by a *lettre*

[1 The Jansenists and Jesuits contended with one another for life and death; the pope wielded his cold thunderbolts in favour of the Jesuits; and the half-theological, half-judicial parliaments on the other hand issued decrees in favour of the Jansenist scheme of personal arrest (*prise de corps*) against all those who obeyed the commands of the pope. The Jansenists worked miracles as evidences of the favour of their merciless Byzantine-Aristotelian god, in which the parliament believed; the Jesuits and the court theologians on the other hand persecuted the miracle-mongers, and the court forbade all miracles which did not proceed from the true church. The parliament on its part defended itself, and judicially persecuted such of the bishops and clergy as refused the last sacraments even upon their death-beds to the narrow-minded devotees of the Romish church, if they did not previously express their approbation of the merciless excommunication of the pope, and when dying pronounce a condemnation and curse upon certain extraordinary doctrines in which they had believed during the whole of their lives. The whole tumult had its origin in a dispute respecting the doctrine of grace, as defined by the dogmatists; and both parties admitted that no one, not even the Apostles themselves, knew, or could know, what properly speaking was the actual state of the case! — SCHLOSSER.[l]]

de cachet. The parliament was incensed at this, turned its resentment from the clergy to the ministry, and made remonstrances against illegal imprisonment and *lettres de cachet*. This threw the royal power instantly into the scale of the Jesuits.

The chiefs of the parliament were taken and sent to different prisons. This, however, was not decided without a struggle in the ministry. Machault, the finance-minister, was for the parliament, as D'Argenson was for the clergy. The opinions of the latter prevailed, but he was unable to complete his plan. This was, to substitute a new court for that consisting of the imprisoned members; but no suitor nor advocate would plead. The remaining courts would not admit of such a menacing usurpation. The *châtelet*, or police-court, intrusted with the execution of condemnation, refused to act, or even to execute a criminal. An accommodation became indispensable. The imprisoned members were allowed to return; silence was imposed upon the clergy as to these disputed matters of faith; and the only point which they gained was the transferring of their enemy, Machault, from the department of finance, in which they had most dread of him, to that of marine affairs. This kind of treaty took place in 1754, on the occasion of the dauphiness being confined of her second son. This child was afterwards Louis XVI.

A Court Costume, Middle of the Eighteenth Century

Such were the public events that filled up the interval of peace betwixt 1748 and 1755. Feats still more important than these took place in the publication of the first volumes of the *Encyclopædia* and of the *Esprit des Lois*. The intellect of the middle classes began to flourish, and to cover, like the ivy, with its verdant honours, the walls and buttresses of the social edifice, whilst the high towers and battlements were falling to decay.[c]

THE "ENCYCLOPÆDIA" AS AN ENGINE OF OPINION

The great work of the *Encyclopædia* was called forth by outside circumstances. An Englishman, Mills, and a German, Sellius, had advertised a French translation of an English cyclopædia, and they commissioned the bookseller Le Breton to undertake the legal formalities. But the latter took out the rights in his own name. This gave rise to great dissent. Mills returned to England, Sellius died. The bookseller did not wish to lose his profits. He appealed to Diderot, who was then a young, gifted, penniless writer just coming forward and seeking employment. The new rights dated from the 21st of January, 1746. Le Breton received half of the proceeds, and the other half was divided between the booksellers David the Elder, Briasson, and Durand.

Diderot comprehended the plan in its widest sense. He not only possessed an active and many sided brain but also had great forethought. He not only wished to give a summary of what man could do, think, and know,

but also desired to make all acquainted with the inner unity, the natural origin of the aims worthy of being attained in regard to it. He joined D'Alembert, who was already a celebrated mathematician, but had kept an eye open for all philosophical and poetic appearances and developments. A number of well-known and guarded professional men of equal disposition were drawn into it. Voltaire was one of the most active and spurring workers, although it was not found advisable to publish his name. Thus the *Encyclopædia* became an effectual party organ. With rare comprehension the human sciences, arts, and skill were collected and made generally useful. But the *Encyclopædia* was no peaceful treasure-house in which the learned men and thinkers could lay down and observe all the riches they had sown; it was a giant engine of war and a subtle weapon.

In the years 1751 and 1752 the first two volumes appeared. Immediately a terrible storm arose. The first opposition was raised by the Sorbonne. The archbishop of Paris wrote a pastoral letter, which as Barbier[m] said, only resulted in the precious and rare book, which up till now had only been known to a few literary and scientific men, being read by all tradesmen and the like. On the 7th of February these two volumes were requisitioned; nevertheless the continuance was not forbidden. For a time D'Alembert thought of having the work published in Berlin; Voltaire advised against this "while more bayonets than books were to be seen there, and its Athens was only to be found in the private room of the king."

After an interruption of almost two years the third volume appeared in October, 1753. Malesherbes, the superintendent of the Press, had returned the confiscated papers to Diderot. The government now at variance with the clergy assisted the undertaking. From 1754 to 1756, the fourth, fifth, and sixth volumes appeared "with the approbation and privilege of the king." The editors had become more prudent, and for a time they had no trouble. D'Alembert[n] wrote to Voltaire: "Time will distinguish what we have thought from what we have said." In the same year, the seventh volume appeared. D'Alembert had triumphantly written to Voltaire that this volume would exceed all others in sharpness; and this was indeed the case. Unfortunately just at this time the famous book *De l'Esprit* of Helvetius was published and stirred up the mind of the people. The attacks increased in number and in strength. Rousseau, who up till now had belonged to both parties, felt himself injured by the article on "Geneva," and wrote his powerful controversy on D'Alembert. The Jesuits stormed. A committee of investigation was appointed. On the intercession of Malesherbes the judgment was mild. On the 8th of March, 1759, there appeared an *Arrêt du Conseil d'Etat*, by which the rights granted in 1746 were withdrawn and the sale of the volumes which had appeared and were appearing forbidden; "on consideration that the benefits derived by art and science were in no proportion to the damage done to religion and morals."

D'Alembert became tired and withdrew. This misfortune made Diderot all the more energetic and obstinate. He worked uninterruptedly with untold pains and dangers. In 1766 the last ten volumes appeared. The cry of the clergy repeated itself, and the publishers were thrown into the Bastille for eight days; but no real impediment was put in the way of the sale. So as to gain the king's favour, Choiseul and Malesherbes had prepared a little manœuvre at court. It was arranged that at table the king should ask how powder was made, and Madame de Pompadour about the best pomade. The *Encyclopædia* was fetched, and information concerning

these read out of it. The king was delighted. The *Encyclopædia* was not allowed but it was tolerated.

Seldom has such a comprehensive work found such a general circulation. Thirty thousand copies constituted the first edition. In 1774 four foreign translations existed. The printing cost 1,158,950 francs, and the clear profits for the booksellers amounted to no less than 2,630,393 francs. For his immense work and for the very great personal danger which he ran Diderot only received 2,500 francs for each volume and besides that 20,000 francs once for all.

If we consider the fundamental organisation of this enterprise in comparison with Bayle's great dictionary, it is one of the most striking proofs of how far more bold and courageous the mind had become. Where anxious doubt existed there is now firm conviction. The time for mediation and appeasement is past. In individual concerns there are many concessions and artful reserves, in others on the contrary the attack and advancement are all the more open and relentless. Diderot in his article concerning the *Encyclopædia* discovers the secret of his tactics, with the unmistakable intention of giving the reader the hints necessary for a right understanding. He says: "Every time that national prejudice deserves respect, it must be respectfully exposed in its particular article and with all its retinue of probability and seduction, but the unstable edifice must be overthrown and the vain heap of dust be dissipated, by referring to the articles where solid principles form the basis to opposed truths. This manner of undeceiving men, unfailingly and without any grievous consequences, secretly and silently operates on all minds. It is the art of deriving the strongest results tacitly. If these references in confirmation or refutation are foreseen and skilfully prepared they will make an encyclopædia of a nature to change the popular mode of thinking."

In places where the authorities can the most surely expect insidious positions, there must be clever circumspection, in others more hidden and remote there must be a fight with open visor. For example in "Christianism" there is the doctrine of Inspiration, in "Apparition" refutation of the same; in "Soul and Liberty" the doctrine of the incorporeality and arbitrariness of the soul, in "Naître" various representations of the doctrine of metabolic assimilation and the thereby compulsory corporeality and positiveness of nature.

Contemporaries were right who considered the *Encyclopædia* the most prominent work of the age. A firm standard had been raised, the signal was given. Gradually but surely, imperceptibly but effectively, the mode of thinking of the new school entered into the dispositions and convictions of men. It was not necessary to agree with all the affirmations of the *Encyclopædia*, and yet its negations might be fully shared; it was not necessary to be its absolute friend and partisan, but at the same time an enemy might be pursued in common. And in this sense, when Cabanis[o] called the encyclopædists by the somewhat exaggerated expression: "the holy confederation against fanaticism and tyranny," for that age it was an actual historical truth.[o]

THE APPROACH OF WAR (1755 A.D.)

War came now to distract attention from the internal state. The French had betrayed an impatience of what they esteemed the pusillanimity of their government. The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was universally stigmatised as inglorious, because it did not add new territories to France. Those in power,

however, had ample materials for judging how dearly Louis XIV had paid for his conquests, and they were prepared to make great sacrifices to preserve peace. In England the court party entertained the same peaceful sentiments, so wise in their principle. But the opposition, headed by Pitt, and supported by popular clamour, demanded the glories of triumphs and trophies. The great and ignominious sacrifice which France had made to English friendship, the arresting and expelling the pretender Charles Stuart from her dominions, was forgotten. The instances of national collision now taking place abroad were exaggerated with premeditated hostility. Each country accuses its antagonist as the aggressor.

In the East Indies, the rivalry of France and England dated from the preceding war. Dupleix, governor of Pondicherry, an ambitious, turbulent, ostentatious man, never ceased to intrigue with the native powers, and with the court of the Mogul, to extend his country's territories and influence. The English naturally intrigued and armed against him; and war was carried on betwixt him and Clive, whilst the respective nations remained at peace at home. In this instance the French government displayed a spirit of fairness and even backwardness. They disowned and recalled Dupleix, to the indignation of their countrymen, and even of their historians who flatter themselves that, despite their naval inferiority, they might yet have disputed the empire of the East.

In North America arose a more serious cause of quarrel. The French possessed Canada and Louisiana, one commanding the mouth of the St. Lawrence, the other that of the Mississippi. The intervening territory was occupied by the English colonists. The French aimed at possessing themselves of the whole course of those rivers and of the Ohio, which almost joins them; thus enclosing British America within a long frontier line of posts, and, consequently, excluding her from the rest of the continent. Such pretensions were untenable from the nature of things, even if treaties favoured them, which they did not. To draw thus a narrow line across the whole extent of a continent, that line itself unoccupied except by stray forts, and these too, for the most part, in embryo, not in being; to draw this around a vast and peopled region, can only be compared in arrogance to the act of the Roman ambassador, marking around the foreign potentate a line in the sand, and daring him to step beyond its magic circle. The only surprise is, to see the French ministry, so forbearing in Europe, risking war upon such unsupportable claims in America. But the science of political geography was not well understood in these days.

The limits betwixt Canada and Nova Scotia, the latter having been ceded to England by the last treaty, were not accurately defined. The officers of each nation, participating little in the moderation of their governments, proceeded to extremities. A French captain was slain. Reprisals followed. Braddock attacked Fort Duquesne on the Ohio, but was defeated by the French and the Indians, whose alliance they had hired. England, on her side, declared war by capturing all the merchant vessels of her rival.[c]

England did this as she once attacked Spain without any warning or formal declaration of intent. As Duclos[p] said: "An English squadron without declaration of war, without the mention of the least discontent, attacked and took two of our vessels, the *Alade* and the *Lys* in June, 1755. This piracy lasted six months before we made reprisals. The English had captured ten thousand sailors before we dreamed of resistance." The conduct of France has some resemblance to that of the United States prior to the War of 1812 with England.[a]

OPENING OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR (1755 A.D.)

When war was tardily declared, the result was even worse humiliation. In the words of Paul Gaulot[a]: "Victory has never been invariably faithful to any people; but even in the hours of defeat, honour can be saved. It has often been seen in the wars France endured or provoked how fate betrayed her arms, but one has not previously seen a shameful reverse in which the vanquished failed to save, in default of glory, at least the esteem of the victors and the pity of posterity. It is not so with what follows, one of the most dolorous epochs of history. How degenerate France seemed! She had soldiers, indeed, brave and daring under fire and fatigue, but no one to command them. The list of generals put at their head would seem to have been arranged by the enemies themselves, so well it served their interests to face such adversaries. The Contades, the Clermonts, the Soubises, generals sustained only by royal favour, were so ridiculous that the French, following the precept which Figaro gave later, 'made haste to laugh to keep from weeping.' They sang.

A French Officer, First Part of Eighteenth Century

"Hostilities so badly begun, operations so ill conducted, could have only the most detestable results: grandeur for Prussia and England, ruin for France. Some brave men however did their whole duty and ought not to be enveloped in the condemnation: Montcalm, Bougainville, Vaudreuil, Dieskau and De Lévis defended Canada for four years with 8,500 regulars and 18,000 colonials against 22,000 English and 58,000 militia supported by a formidable fleet. Lally-Tollendal, with 700 men, ruined Pondicherry, resisted the attacks of 20,000 English soldiers and fourteen vessels. There were some glorious pages of history there, but the theatre of these exploits was far away; the French government forgot Montcalm and his companions, and if it remembered Lally it was only to condemn him to death for treason. Twelve years later, it is true, his memory was rehabilitated; this will not be true of the memory of those who judged him."

To the spectator of the first period of the war none of these disasters was visible. To them France was continuing her path of glory, triumphing on land and sea and in the colonies oversea.[a]

When the moment at length arrived for the commencement of a struggle, for many months delayed by so many acts of cowardice and folly, there was an immense disparity of naval force. The royal French navy, completely ruined in 1748, had been restored, but in proportion very insufficient in comparison with the formidable number of vessels massed in the harbours of England. The English had one hundred ships-of-the-line, of from 50 to 120

guns, of which sixteen were three-deckers with 90 to 120 guns, and seventy-four were frigates of from 32 to 46 guns; their building yards and arsenals were in the best condition; those of the French were destitute of wood for building, of rigging, masts, and even of artillery! The French had but sixty ships-of-the-line and thirty-one frigates. Of the sixty ships three were unfit for service; eight were being overhauled; four stood unfinished on the slips; of the forty-five others the greater part needed to be repaired before putting out to sea.

Even this figure had only been reached because Machault, having been transferred to the navy department in 1754, had caused fifteen vessels to be rapidly constructed or finished in one year. Machault, so criminally complacent or so ill informed in Indian affairs, was roused in the time of need and showed much decision and vigour: a great number of new ships were set on the slips; extraordinary efforts were made to obtain supplies; rewards were offered to privateers; and considerable armaments at Brest and Le Havre and numerous troops collected in the French channel-ports put the English in dread of a descent either on their coasts or on Jersey or Guernsey. A general panic bore witness to the fact that England, so warlike on the ocean, had little of this quality on her own soil; as at the time of the invasion of Charles Edward, the English people were only reassured by the summons of foreign mercenaries, Hanoverians and Hessians: the preceding year George II had concluded a treaty promising to subsidise the landgraf of Hesse-Cassel who had engaged to lend him as many as twelve thousand soldiers if required; the princes of Hesse, descendants of heroes, had become mere merchants of human flesh.

These threats of a descent on England deceived the enemy concerning the true plans of the French government, advised, it is said, by the old duke of Noailles. At the very beginning of the year small squadrons had set sail for the Lesser Antilles, Santo Domingo, and Canada. On the 10th of April twelve other vessels, commanded by La Gallissonière, set out for Toulon, escorting 150 transports freighted with some twelve thousand men under the orders of Marshal Richelieu. On the 17th the expedition descended on the island of Minorca.

The French take Minorca

The point of attack had been well chosen; no blow could be more damaging to England than the loss of this post whence she threatened Toulon and dominated the western basin of the Mediterranean. As an offensive position Port Mahon was more formidable than Gibraltar itself. The choice of the naval leader was not less praiseworthy; La Gallissonière was the best of French sailors. The name of the general was not so welcome to the public. The king's pander, the model corrupter, growing more depraved with increasing years, little faith was placed in his political and military talents. The event did not however justify the apprehensions which his name had excited.

The French seized Ciudadela on the 18th of April and then directed their march to Fort Mahon, the capital of the island. The English evacuated Mahon and concentrated in the fort of St. Philip, a huge citadel which commands the entrance of the arm of the sea which forms the harbour of Mahon. The English government had allowed itself to be surprised: an arrogant confidence in 1755 and, since the threats of descent, an exaggerated fear had prevented it from sending a squadron to winter in the Mediterranean and from reinforcing the garrison of Minorca: if the citadel was strong and well provisioned the garrison was not numerous; there were but

twenty-five hundred men to defend this vast extent of fortifications. When on the 19th of May, a relieving squadron did at last arrive it was already more than eight days since the French cannon had made breaches in the outworks.

The issue of the siege was to depend on the shock of the two squadrons. The English fleet commanded by Admiral Byng was slightly superior to the French; it consisted of thirteen ships against twelve. It attacked on the 20th of May, having the wind behind it. The van of the French which came first into action was roughly handled; but the enemy did not attempt to pursue their advantage; the object was to cut off and overwhelm the rearguard that they might approach the shore by Fort St. Philip. La Gallissonière perceived his adversary's intention and kept his ships in such close order that it was impossible for the English to break through the line. The cannonade was not to their advantage. In firing the French marine artillery had the same superiority over theirs that their infantry had over the French. Their manœuvres were frustrated and three of their vessels had sprung a leak so that they were in danger of sinking. Admiral Byng, judging that a prolonged battle might lead to the destruction of his fleet, effected his retreat. La Gallissonière, having the wind against him and faithful to his instructions which charged him to subordinate everything to the success of the siege, would not leave the neighbourhood of Port Mahon and allowed the enemy to regain Gibraltar.

To have victoriously sustained the shock of the English on their own element was in itself a considerable success. But the garrison of Fort St. Philip did not lose heart. The labours of the siege were heavy and Richelieu had at first directed them unskilfully, but he made great efforts to win the confidence and keep up the spirit of his soldiers. When signs of disorder showed themselves in the camp and the men began to indulge somewhat too freely in Spanish wines, Richelieu, instead of punishing them, issued an order of the day to the effect that "such as became intoxicated would not have the honour of working in the trenches." The idea was a happy one and there was a general cessation of drinking.

Richelieu ventured on a general assault. It was a rash proceeding and he must have had great confidence in the French soldiers, the first in the world in this kind of fighting. Six or seven weeks of bombardment had scarcely any effect on the masses of rock which served the place as outworks; the ditches had not been filled up; the walls still stood erect. On the night of the 27th–28th of June, whilst a large detachment in boats are endeavouring to force entrance to the harbour, four columns fling themselves into the dry moat; cannon and musketry sweep the front ranks; mines blow up the bottom of the moat with those who are crossing it; dead and wounded are succeeded by crowds of others ready to avenge them; the ladders are too short by several feet; officers and men climb on one another's shoulders, plant bayonets in the interstices of the stones and reach the top of the rampart. At break of day the English are amazed to behold the besiegers masters of three of the forts; though the main defences are intact, the governor decides to capitulate that very day.

The French could scarcely believe in their conquest, when they saw themselves in the midst of all these formidable works which they could never have scaled in cold blood, by daylight and without an enemy. In Paris and throughout France there was a veritable delirium of joy. Richelieu owed to the valour of the French grenadiers a rehabilitation which was more brilliant than lasting. The true hero of the expedition, La Gallissonière,

did not enjoy the gratitude of his fellow citizens. Attacked by an incurable disease, his strength of will had supported him till the conclusion of the enterprise; on his return he succumbed and died on the way to Paris. His loss was not repaired.

The rage of the English was in proportion to the joy of France. They had fancied that they had but to go out to the prey, and they now beheld one of their most precious possessions snatched from them. The popular fury was frightful and demanded a victim. The terrified ministers surrendered Admiral Byng, guilty perhaps of not having done all that he might, but less guilty in his weakness than they in their negligence. A great suit was commenced against the unfortunate admiral.[1]

Other French Successes

Both sides were anxiously waiting for news from Canada which might bring some compensation to the English. The French general, Montcalm, embarked on Lake Ontario and descended on Oswego which was the pivot of the operations of the English. The three forts of Oswego, defended by eighteen hundred men against three thousand, were reduced to capitulate at the end of four days, almost in sight of the two thousand soldiers who were advancing to their rescue (14th of August). The French destroyed the forts to the great satisfaction of the Iroquois, the original owners of the country. On the whole the issue of the campaign in America as in the Mediterranean had been as satisfactory to France as it was unhoped for. French diplomacy had obtained other successes in Europe which confirmed the military victories. Holland sided with the French. England punished the Dutch by arbitrary seizures of their vessels; then declared that all the ports of France were in a state of blockade and that all vessels despatched from those ports would be seized as lawful prize wherever they were encountered (August, 1756). The principle of the paper blockade was the reversal of all maritime rights, of all the rights of neutrals; it was a formal adoption of the code of piracy which had been so well carried out in practice. Such a system was of a nature to turn against England the wishes and perhaps the arms of every nation which possessed a navy.

A French Gallant, Middle of the Eighteenth Century

France responded to the proclamation of the paper blockade by a new progress in the Mediterranean. The French set foot on Corsica the 1st of November, 1756, and thus with Toulon, Corsica, and Minorca, France found herself mistress of the whole western basin of the Mediterranean.

[1 John Byng, who is not to be confused with his victorious father, Admiral George Byng, was found guilty of dereliction of duty, but not of cowardice, and strongly recommended by the court-martial to mercy. But the ministry, desirous of appeasing the popular rage, ignored the recommendation, and Byng, who conducted himself with great bravery throughout his ordeal, was shot March 14th, 1757.]

There was something miraculous in having thus been able to win the upper hand in a struggle for which she was so ill prepared and which had been so ill begun. The fight at Port Mahon and the whole campaign had shown what the French navy might become on two conditions: namely, that the chief financial resources of France should be devoted to it and that the bad spirit of the officers of noble rank should be repressed by severe examples. Brave and highly trained, but imbued with the most senseless and reprehensible prejudices, they disdained the important duty of protecting the mercantile marine, and there were certain among them who pushed to the verge of treason the ill will they cherished against the officers who were not obliged to prove their nobility. It was once more possible, by devoting France to that task alone, to retrieve the fortune which the French had allowed to escape them in India and to dispute the empire of the seas and of America. The contrary course was to be taken. We are now to witness an example of folly, of imbecile treason to self such as has scarcely a parallel in history.

France commits a Great Blunder

The great interest of France was the maintenance of the peace of the continent, in order to have both arms free on the seas. The English government for its part appeared to seek nothing by its continental alliances except auxiliary troops and future protection for Hanover. It was with this view that it had just renewed its treaties with Russia and obtained the promise of a force of fifty-five thousand men if Hanover should be attacked, September 30th, 1755. All that was needed was to abstain from carrying the war into Germany; no one was in a position to attack France on the continent. Unfortunately, another power thought it to its advantage to relight the torch in Europe: this was Austria.

Maria Theresa, always obstinate, still meditated revenge against the king of Prussia. Since 1748 she had given ear to a bold and clever counsellor who was urging her to change the whole system of European relations. The count of Kaunitz, at this time still a young man, was what Marshal Richelieu imagined himself to be, a profound politician under the frivolous exterior of a man of fashion. As early as the time of the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, Kaunitz had entered into a correspondence with Madame de Pompadour and had induced the empress to authorise him to insinuate to the French plenipotentiary that it would be easy to reconcile completely the houses of Bourbon and Austria, and that Austria would gladly cede Flanders and Brabant if France would help her to recover Silesia.

Maria Theresa renewed her overtures on divers occasions. When the news of the English aggression against the French navy was received, Stahremberg, the Austrian ambassador to France, formally offered the Austrian alliance. A contrary offer was made at the same time by the Prussian ambassador Kniphausen. Frederick II proposed to France to unite with her against England and Austria. The count d'Argenson, minister of war, supported the propositions of the king of Prussia. Machault, minister of marine, protested against any offensive alliance on the continent.

In 1755 the pious, the chaste Maria Theresa wrote with her own hand to the mistress of Louis XV calling her "my cousin" and loading her with flatteries. Pompadour's head was completely turned and she devoted herself unreservedly to "her friend" the empress, who was thus magnificently compensating her for the king of Prussia's contempt.

Madame de Pompadour had an easier task with the king than she had hoped. As regards Frederick, Louis had not merely the jealousy of a vain and petty mind for genius, but a bigot's hatred of the impious. The idea of a great Catholic alliance was peculiarly flattering to him. He was persuaded that a king who supported the cause of the church would not be damned for his private failings. The politics of Europe were debated between Bernis, Stahremberg, and Madame de Pompadour.

On the 16th of January, 1756, Prussia's agent in London signed with the ministers of George II as elector of Hanover a defensive treaty against "any foreign power which should send troops into Germany." Frederick did not attempt to make a mystery to France of this engagement and protested against any thought of hostility. Frederick spoke the truth, but Louis XV was as much offended by his defection as if the elector of Brandenburg had been the rebel vassal of the king of France. The court of Vienna seized the moment, and requested a defensive agreement against the king of Prussia. The king and Madame de Pompadour, in their warlike ardour, desired an offensive alliance.

The fatal Treaty of Versailles was signed on the 1st of May, 1756. It consisted of two separate conventions: (1) the empress-queen promised neutrality in the existing differences between France and England; (2) the empress-queen and the king of France guaranteed each other's possessions in Europe, and promised mutual aid to the extent of twenty-four thousand fighting men against any aggressor. The case of the present war with England was excepted by Austria: France laid claim to no exception, not even in the case of war between Austria and Turkey, a reservation which England had been very careful to make in her treaties with Austria. If this omission were not rectified it meant the complete annihilation of French policy and influence in the Levant. As to the immediate significance of the treaty, it amounted to this: that Austria only undertook not to aid England against France and that France engaged to lend Austria twenty-four thousand men to aid her against Prussia if necessary.

ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE THE KING

Early in January, 1757, as Louis XV was proceeding to enter his carriage from the palace of Versailles, a man advanced and stabbed him in the side with a penknife. "There is the man who struck me," said Louis: "take him, and do him no harm." The wound was slight; but as the knife might be poisoned, the whole court was in alarm, and Louis himself not least. The madman, who had made this foolish attempt, was named Damiens. The keeper of the seals seized him, conveyed him to a chamber of the palace, and there causing a pair of pincers to be heated, the chief officer of justice began by torturing the criminal. Damiens' crime seems to have proceeded from no deeper cause than that itch for action and notoriety, the extreme of which the sane find it so difficult to comprehend. With a glimmering instinct, he sought to give reason and respectability to his crime by associating it with the cause of the parliament and Jansenism. The incoherent ravings and confessions of this crazy being, extracted from him partly by torture, filled the court and kingdom with suspicions, and greatly increased the animosities on both sides. What was supposed to be the death-bed of the monarch was immediately surrounded by intrigue. Machault and D'Argenson, though mutual enemies, united in working on the king's conscience, with a view to exiling Madame de Pompadour. An order was sent her to

retire from court. But the wound was no sooner found to be insignificant than the mistress was recalled, and the two ministers were sacrificed to her. Both were exiled.

The Parisian populace, who had offered up prayers for the king's recovery at Metz, were not long since persuaded that children were stolen and slain to afford baths of blood, calculated to renovate the exhausted frame of the royal debauchee.

The accommodation brought about between parliament and clergy did not produce peace. The archbishop de Beaumont took the first opportunity to renew his refusal of the sacraments. The king sent the duke de Richelieu to him to remonstrate upon his absurd zeal. "My conscience," replied the bishop, "can allow of no accommodation." "Your conscience," retorted the witty duke, "is a dark lantern, that enlightens no one save yourself." The archbishop was exiled to his country seat by the king's order. The parliament condemned and fined the bishop of Orleans for refusing the sacraments, and even sold his furniture to pay the fine. The old scandal was renewed throughout the kingdom. The clergy were, however, obliged to find some less extreme mode of acting against the Jansenists. The parliament was inexorable as ever; and the Jesuits again succeeded in kindling a quarrel between king and parliament, during which the clergy were forgotten, or left in possession of their prerogatives. Louis, in order to subdue the magistracy, had recourse to a scheme which Francis I had before attempted without success. This was to attribute to the great council of state the same privilege and authority as that wielded by the parliament. The latter summoned the peers to join them in an assembly. The king forbade them to attend. In the midst of those differences arose the necessity of new taxes to support the war. The monarch came to register them in a bed of justice. The morrow brought remonstrances from the parliament against the clergy and against the taxes. Louis in anger imprisoned the refractory members. The struggle between the legists and the Jesuits seemed to be, which should first wear out the patience of the monarch. The legists vanquished, through the support of Madame de Pompadour, and of one of her counsellors, the count de Stainville, afterwards duke de Choiseul.

FRENCH VICTORIES ON LAND (1757 A.D.)

Notwithstanding her conquest of Minorca, France was aware that her colonies must fall before the maritime superiority of England: it therefore behoved her to occupy the continental dominions of the king of that country. An army was sent against Hanover, commanded by the marshal d'Estrées. The duke of Cumberland levied a German force to oppose it; but being far inferior in numbers, he retired step by step before the French, allowing them to cross the Rhine, and even the Weser, which river forms the natural defence of Hanover.[c]

The generals and officers, who at that time were selected exclusively from the nobility, continued to enjoy all the pleasures of Parisian life in the camp, and, as we learn from the memoirs of the liberal count Ségur,[s] engaged in intrigues and cabals. No attention was given to subordination except in the very moment of service, and sometimes even not then. This expedition to Germany was regarded by the whole of the distinguished youth and nobility of France as a mere party of pleasure. In D'Estrées' army there were forty-one lieutenant-generals, all marquises or dukes, and fifty-five brigadier-generals, all in like manner members of the high nobility, besides the duke of

Orleans and the prince of Condé attended by an immense field equipage, the dukes of Fronsac and Mazarin, and the count de la Marche, a prince of the royal blood, who accompanied the army as volunteers. When we think of the baggage alone by which such a number of great and licentious nobles must have been followed, and remember besides that Maillebois, who was at the head of D'Estrées' staff, did all in his power to prevent any decisive movement from being made till Richelieu, who was making every possible exertion, should succeed in his cabals and obtain D'Estrées' command, we cannot wonder that the army advanced at so slow a pace towards the Weser. The second army destined for Germany had been foolishly placed under the sole and unlimited command of Pompadour's favourite, the dissolute and gallant prince de Rohan Soubise, who was accompanied by officers and a staff which were in all respects worthy of their commander. Richelieu assembled the third army in Alsace.[t]

The king of Prussia, England's ally, had begun the campaign with the invasion of Bohemia, where he at first established himself by winning the celebrated and sanguinary battle of Prague over the Austrians under Prince Charles of Lorraine; but seeking to follow up his advantage, Frederick experienced in the following month a severe check, being defeated by Daun at Kolin. At the same time D'Estrées was pressing the duke of Cumberland, who at length made a stand, strongly posted, however, and entrenched between Hameln and Hastenbeck, near the Weser.

It was the lieutenants rather than the generals of both armies that were destined to distinguish themselves. Chevert[1] attacked the duke's left, drove it from its entrenchments and cannon, and pushed on; Maillebois, who was to support him, hesitated: Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick seized the opportunity, marched his division between Chevert and the French, and charged the latter, so as to put them in disorder. Chevert, however, had precisely the same success against the duke, who was the first to sound a retreat. D'Estrées was about to issue the same order to his troops, when he observed the enemy retiring, and became thus informed of Chevert's success.

The duke of Cumberland, after this affair, was obliged to abandon Hanover. The marshal de Richelieu arrived on the following day to supersede D'Estrées, and under him the French continued their pursuit of the Hanoverian army, plundering and levying merciless contributions on the unfortunate electorate. Richelieu was called "Father Maraud" by his soldiers. The duke sought to retire to Stade: he hoped, late in the season as it then was, to be able to hold out in that marshy country near the mouth of the Elbe, which is impracticable for military operation; but Richelieu's activity deprived him of this resource. The duke of Cumberland was obliged to sign the capitulation of Closter-Seven (September 8th, 1757), called from a convent of that name, which was the headquarters of the French.

This disgraceful capitulation,[2] which abandoned Hanover to the French, and left the Prussian dominions exposed to their inroad, would have reduced any prince except the great Frederick to despair. Deserted by his only ally, all Europe was in arms against him. Russia advanced from the east; Austria, Poland, Saxony, united their forces; whilst a German army, called that of the Circles, headed by Soubise and strengthened by 30,000 French,

[1 François Chevert, born at Verdun in 1695, was a soldier at sixteen: his life was nothing but a series of heroic actions; but being of low birth, he could not be made a marshal.*q*]

[2 England later disavowed the treaty and put her soldiers in the field again.]

menaced him from the southwest. The enemy occupied his capital, Berlin, from which the royal family had escaped to Magdeburg.

In this extremity Frederick endeavoured to negotiate with Richelieu: he flattered the duke; upbraided him for counteracting the policy of his great uncle, the celebrated cardinal, by raising up the power of Austria; and besought him, in covert terms, to oppose La Pompadour in her fatal obsequiousness to the empress. These attempts had the good effect of amusing Richelieu and paralysing his activity. Frederick was not blind to the critical state of his affairs. Twenty thousand men were all that he could muster: with these Frederick resolved to fight the united army of French and Germans commanded by the prince of Soubise and the prince of Hildburghausen: they numbered upwards of fifty thousand men. Despite of this inferiority they dreaded Frederick, and retreated from Leipsic at his approach, crossing the Saale: he passed in after them, and, coming in sight, hesitated. The Germans and French, gathering audacity from the king's inaction, hovered round him, marching along his flank, and menacing an attack. It was the morning of the 5th of November: Frederick spent it in reconnoitring the enemy.

A French Officer, Middle of the Eighteenth Century

It was not till the afternoon that he gave his orders, gathering the greater part of his troops on one point, on his left, and concealing the movement by the inequality of the ground, as well as by his tents, which he left pitched. Ere Soubise or Hildburghausen could make a corresponding movement, the Prussians broke through all before them on the point of attack; and the rest of the confederate army, seeing its flank laid bare, turned and fled. So simple was the decisive battle of Rossbach[1] that retrieved the fortunes of Prussia.[c]

Kitchin[t] calls the battle of Rossbach "a most eccentric and humorous battle, lasting only an hour and a half. The grim and tattered Prussians were not a little amused at the extraordinary rubbish, the theatrical accessories, the mass of luxuries, the disreputable high life which fell into their hands." Gaulot[q] quotes a song with which France consoled itself on the disaster of the contemptible Soubise; it may be roughly Englished thus:

[1 The field of Rossbach is near those of Jena, of Lützen, and of Leipsic. The banks of the Saale are fully immortalised by carnage.]

"Soubise exclaimed, lantern in hand: 'I must hunt round; where is my army? 'Twas here yesterday morning; has somebody captured it or am I astray? Ah, I'm all lost, I am distraught. But no, let us wait till broad daylight, till noon. And yet, heavens! what do I see? How my soul is rejoiced! Beautiful miracle; there it is! there it is! But ah, *ventrebleu!* what can it be? I was wrong: it's the enemy's army!'" Everything was set to music in the France of the Old Régime.[a]

On the 5th of the following month, Frederick, who had marched into Silesia, defeated the Austrians at Lissa, and recovered his ancient superiority in despite of his numerous enemies. In the meantime the duke of Richelieu, having broken so far through the terms of capitulation at Closter-Seven as to seek to disarm the Hanoverian troops, which by that agreement were to remain quiet, but not to lose their arms, found those vanquished enemies start up afresh. Their new leader, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, far surpassing the duke of Cumberland in military talent, was now able to hold Richelieu in check. The English ministry, roused by the spirit of the elder Pitt, made every effort to second her gallant ally: a body of English troops reinforced the Hanoverian army, and the next campaign seemed to promise revenge for the duke of Cumberland's defeat.

In the beginning of the year 1758, Richelieu was superseded in his command by the Count of Clermont, who being at the same time abbot of St. Germain des Prés, was called the general of the Benedictines. Under him the French commenced their retreat from Hanover.

Prince Ferdinand precipitated this retrograde movement by anticipating their arrival on the Weser: he attacked and took Minden. In May, the French were already behind the Rhine, shamefully routed without even the honour of fighting, and leaving upwards of ten thousand prisoners in the hands of the enemy. Prince Ferdinand soon passed that river. The French general purposed to continue his retreat towards France, when the indignation and wounded pride of his officers obliged him to await the attack of the prince at Crefeld (or Crevelt) in the duchy of Cleves. There the count of St. Germain offered a gallant resistance to the enemy; it might have been a successful one, when the count de Clermont gave abrupt orders to retreat, and abandoned his lieutenant. The French left seven thousand dead on the field, and with them all hopes of retrieving the disasters of the campaign.

At this juncture the very diplomatist who had counselled and concluded the treaty with Maria Theresa — the cardinal de Bernis, a creature too of the mistress — thought fit to oppose his conviction to her obstinacy, and speak in opposition to the war. La Pompadour was positive. Bernis was disgraced,[1] and Choiseul became secretary of state in his stead. The new minister, though too sage not to perceive the folly of persisting in a war from whence so little was to be gained, paid, nevertheless, the price of his elevation by renewing the treaty with Austria, and making fresh preparations for carrying on the war.[c]

After his disgrace at Crefeld, Clermont, whom Schlosser[l] calls "effeminate, incapable, and sickly," was replaced by the count de Contades, who was somewhat less disqualified.[a] Soubise was reinstated and reinforced, and the duke de Broglie's army placed under his command. Contades no sooner joined the army on the lower Rhine than Soubise commenced his march on the 8th of July, 1758. Contades first watched the movements of the enemy for some

[1 Frederick the Great said of the abbé Bernis, "His follies were his fortune; when he grew wise he fell."]

time, then drove him continually but slowly further back: Soubise was opposed by the prince of Isenburg, who, however, with his six to seven thousand men, was by no means equal to the superior French force. Isenburg advanced to meet Broglie, who commanded Soubise's advance, and came to an engagement upon the heights of Sangerhausen. Broglie was victorious.

Contades compelled Prince Ferdinand to recross the Rhine, on which occasion the prince gained great renown by his masterly retreat. The prince was now reinforced by twelve thousand English troops which had been landed at Emden, whilst Contades increased his forces by eight thousand Saxons, who had escaped from their compulsory service in Prussia and were taken into French pay.

Soubise advanced anew. Count Oberg most imprudently and unwisely offered him battle near Landwehrhagen on the Lutterberge (December 30th, 1758). This engagement ended in the complete rout of the allies, who were thrown into confusion, and Oberg's division would have been wholly annihilated if Soubise had followed up his advantage; but he was too well pleased to have gained a victory[1] at all to make any further efforts, and was created a marshal, as well as Contades, but immediately retreated to Cassel and still further. Oberg indeed received his dismissal. Contades, it is true, took up his winter-quarters on the farther side of the Rhine; but Soubise paved a sure way for retreat to the French armies destined against Hanover and Hesse, by the treacherous occupation of Frankfort. The court was in the meantime at length convinced that Soubise was incapable of conducting any great operations, and Contades was appointed commander-in-chief of both the armies on the Rhine.

The campaign of 1758 proved as indecisive in other parts of Germany as on the Rhine and in Westphalia, and as fruitful in misery, devastation, and sorrow to the unfortunate inhabitants of the country.[b]

Whilst the king of Prussia, with unchanged courage and talent, but with most uncertain fortune, was making head against his enemies, the French army was mustered near Frankfort in the spring of 1759. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick began the campaign by attacking it at Bergham, but was repulsed by the marshal de Broglie. The French now drove the prince of Brunswick before them, and reached once more the banks of the Weser. Minden was taken; and the inhabitants of Hanover began to look forward to falling again into the power of the French. Prince Ferdinand rallied his forces, however, and took post near Minden, putting an isolated column in advance to entice and deceive his enemies. Contades marched, on the 1st of August, 1759, to attack this body, placing his cavalry in the centre, and his foot upon the wings. The French attribute to this disposition the loss of the day, their horse being swept away and routed by the batteries[2] which Prince Ferdinand had prepared, whilst the infantry, disordered by its defeat, were unable to act with effect, and were driven from the field. The loss of the French was severe; amongst their colonels slain at the affair of Minden was the marquis de la Fayette, a noble of an ancient family. He left his marchioness, a lady of the house of Lusignan, pregnant. This posthumous child is the La Fayette of the Revolution.[c]

The obstinacy or cowardice of an English general, who belonged to the

[1 "The success was Chevert's; the recompense fell to Soubise." — GAULOT.[d]]

[2 There were six English regiments of infantry which won the name of Minden regiments from their heroic firmness in marching against the heavy French cavalry, who charged in vain again and again, and finally fled.]

same caste from which the generals of the French army were chosen, saved the French army which was beaten from complete destruction. Germaine commanded in this battle the first division of the English cavalry; he received orders three times from the commander-in-chief to fall on the enemy, but as often excused himself. He was even unwilling at first to allow Lord Granby, the leader of the second division, to yield obedience to Ferdinand's command: this, however, was done against his will, but the full effect of the movement was no longer to be attained. The English nation was filled with indignation at this conduct on the part of Germaine; he was dismissed with disgrace, called before a court-martial and found guilty: we shall nevertheless afterwards meet with him in the following period as one of the ministers of George III, conducting the affairs of the American War with the greatest negligence and ignorance, and after having brought disgrace and injury upon himself, his colleagues, and the nation, and finally been driven out of the house of commons and the ministry, appearing under the title of earl of Sackville as a peer of Great Britain.

The victory gained by Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick at Minden is reckoned among the most splendid deeds of the century, and Contades was placed in circumstances of great danger in his retreat. The hereditary prince of Brunswick, Ferdinand's nephew, drove the French beyond the Rhine, and gained some considerable advantages over the duke de Brissac at Crefeld. The French themselves admit that it would have been possible completely to have cut off the retreat of their conquered army to the Rhine and the Maine: their retreat resembled a quick and ruinous flight.[b]

Ruin of the French Navy; Losses in India and America

This year proved most unfortunate to the French. Hitherto the English fleets had more insulted than harmed them. They had made frequent descents, at Rochefort, at St. Malo, and at Cherbourg, causing damage, indeed, and bearing away trophies, but reaping no advantage, whilst it deepened the generous rivalry of the hostile nations into bitter and inveterate hatred. Pitt brought vigour and largeness of purpose to the British war councils; and France now saw her fleets destroyed, and her colonies fall one by one. Admiral Boscawen fought La Clue near the Straits of Gibraltar, took two men-of-war, and burned several others, August 17th.[c]

In spite of this serious check the cabinet of Versailles did not entirely abandon its projects; it gave up the grand army of Soubise but not the duke d'Aiguillon's expedition, which was to make its way to Scotland, whilst a small squadron setting out from Dunkirk was to go by the north of Scotland to effect a diversion in Ireland. The plan might have succeeded if the soldiers and their transports had been assembled with the fleet in the roadstead at Brest; but the selfish vanity of the duke d'Aiguillon had retained them at Morbihan, where he commanded in chief whilst at Brest he would have been subordinate to Marshal de Conflans. The fleet had therefore to go to meet this convoy.

On the 20th of November Admiral Hawke came up with Conflans off Belle-Île. Conflans had twenty-one vessels against twenty-three. He had nothing to do but to receive the shock bravely. He tried to avoid it by passing along the rocks called Les Cardinaux, and entangling his fleet in the bay, bristling with islets and reefs, which forms the mouth of the Vilaine. Admiral Hawke, who had the wind in his favour, followed the French undauntedly at the risk of losing himself with them in what were a kind of maritime defiles.

The commander of the French rearguard, Saint-André du Verger, repeated the devotion of the brave Sabran. He invited his own ruin in order to arrest the enemy and made himself illustrious by a glorious death. His crew was almost annihilated when the flag was taken. The French ships, tossed about in a stormy sea in the midst of the rocks, knocked up against one another, whilst it was impossible to manipulate them. Two were sunk; two went to pieces on the reefs. Night suspended the disaster. At break of day, Conflans' flagship and another vessel were wrecked and burned in the bay of Le Croisic. Two English vessels were lost on the sand-banks while endeavouring to follow Conflans. The French van, seven vessels strong, had hardly been engaged at all and might have avenged Saint-André and atoned for the disgrace of Conflans. Its leader, Beaufremont, thought only of regaining the open and went to take refuge at Rochefort. Another division of seven vessels, favoured by the tide, entered the Vilaine where it might have been thought impossible for frigates to penetrate; it thus saved itself but could not come out again. Before the Vilaine and the Charente, the English resumed the blockade they had previously kept up before Brest.

A Colonel of French Infantry, Eighteenth Century

This deplorable catastrophe[1] completed the humiliation of France; the fleet, which had hitherto preserved its honour intact, fell to the level of the land army. The corruption, effeminacy, and selfishness of the court had spread from the military to the maritime nobility.

The Dunkirk squadron had set out a month before the disaster of the Vilaine under the orders of an ex-pirate named Thurot, and much dreaded by English merchants. After various adventures this intrepid sailor effected a descent on Ireland in the month of February, 1760, and took the town of Carrickfergus. It was simply an effort of despair and could only mean the sacrifice of brave men. Thurot was slain and his squadron captured. The cabinet of Versailles, overcome by these decisive reverses, renounced all further maritime enterprises. The most melancholy tidings, one blow following another, had arrived from America.

The fate of Canada was decided by that action where Wolfe fell in the achievement of victory, bequeathing Quebec, and the wide provinces of which

[1 The French as usual found solace in epigram, and thereafter called this flight (which the English call the battle of Quiberon Bay) "the day of Monsieur Conflans." The term has since been used for a disaster in which the defeated has lost without even engaging. Kitchin calls the year 1759 "the most disastrous perhaps ever seen by France; the 'Annus Mirabilis,' if ever there was one, of the English people."]

it is the capital, to the possession of his country (1759). Notwithstanding the defeat of Minden, the duke de Broglie was enabled to keep his positions in the countries of Hesse and Cleves. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick endeavoured generously to put forward his nephew, the young hereditary prince. But neither birth nor favour can make a general. The French defeated him near Cassel. The young commander was then sent against the town of Wesel, but here too he was repulsed by the marquis de Castries. It was in this campaign that the chevalier d'Assas, whilst in advance of his regiment, fell alone in an ambuscade. "If you speak a word, you die," cried the enemy, whose success depended upon being yet undiscovered. "Help! here is the enemy!" cried the gallant young officer, calling and warning his regiment, whilst he received his death shot on the instant for his heroism.

The struggle of the rival nations for superiority in the East Indies was this year decided. Count Lally, the Irish officer to whom the victory of Fontenoy was chiefly owing, had succeeded to the command as well as to the activity and talents of Dupleix. He had worsted and harassed the English, and had even laid siege to Madras. In Coote, who now commanded the British, he found a countryman and a triumphant rival. Lally was worsted in turn, and besieged in Pondicherry, which was taken in the early part of 1761. Lally was a zealous soldier, but an overbearing and despotic governor. His conduct excited powerful enmity. He cared not on whom his censure fell; whether on the ministry, the court, or the very country for which he fought. Accused of causing the loss of Pondicherry, he repaired to Paris and faced his accusers. Committed to the Bastille, pursued by the calumnies of the French India Company, and the populace who joined them, the unfortunate Lally was condemned to lose his head. So much was his ferocious temper dreaded, that a gag was placed in his mouth as he was led to execution. So iniquitous a judgment proves how unfit the parliament was to exercise even judicial functions, much less the legislative authority, which it claimed.

The duke de Choiseul in the meantime sought fresh support, and was happy enough to secure it by an alliance with Spain. The present king of that country was Charles III. Betwixt him and France was concluded the Family Compact, by which the houses of Bourbon promised mutual aid. It was an unfortunate act for Spain, whose colonies of Cuba and Manila, with her ships of war and commerce, fell at once into the hands of England. In short, had France or her government been bribed to enrich and afford triumphs to Great Britain, she could scarcely have adopted other measures, or persisted in policy more pernicious. She now lost Guadeloupe and Martinique, every colony almost and foot of earth beyond her continental realm. Even Belle-Île on her own coast was captured. When one country had nought left to lose, and the other little to win, the overthrow of Pitt, and the rise of Lord Bute's influence, consequent upon the death of George II and the accession of his grandson, opened the way for peace.

It was signed at Paris, February 10th, 1763. France ceded Canada and Cape Breton. The Mississippi was declared to be the boundary betwixt the colonies of the respective nations; New Orleans, however, on its left bank, adhered to Louisiana. In India, property and territories were restored to their ancient limits; but the French were to send thither no more troops. Guadeloupe and Martinique were restored to France; Grenada was kept by the British, who, besides, appropriated St. Vincent's, Dominica, and Tobago. Senegal was also ceded to them, and Minorca restored. The demolition

of the port of Dunkirk was to be completed, and an English commissioner to oversee the execution of this article.

Peace could scarcely have been rendered more disgraceful to France, and yet she signed it, so pusillanimous was her government, so exhausted were her finances, so spiritless and disorganised her armies. The nation, proudly susceptible, deeply felt the humiliation. They attributed it not to their own want of courage, or talent, or resources, but to the imbecility of their government, and fundamentally to the vice of its constitution. Whatever of loyalty, or of ancient attachment to despotic rule, still lingered in the country, evaporated with the national honour on witnessing this disgraceful treaty.[1] As religion had lost its hold over French minds by the absurd conduct and misrule of its chief, so did royalty. Both fell as much from mismanagement as from the arguments or attacks of enemies. Facts and not words produce ultimate effects, and decide the opinions of the many; and governments, like individuals, gain solidity and general esteem, much more by their achievements and fortunes than by the pleas of birthright or good intentions.

Almost simultaneously with this Treaty of Paris, that betwixt Austria and Prussia was signed at Hubertusburg. Frederick still held the much-contested Silesia. Far more than a million of men had been sacrificed in vain. The frontier betwixt Austria and Prussia remained the same. The glory of the war chiefly remained with Frederick, who, through an unexampled course of victories and reverses, still preserved the character of great. Perhaps the most astonishing reflection is that the Prussian monarch ruled over not more than four millions of subjects, a population that constitutes but a very secondary state. Yet out of this he raised armies and funds to combat at once France, Germany, Poland, and Russia. Bonaparte effected wonders with ample means; but when reduced to play the forlorn game of Frederick against united Europe, the great French captain fell, the Prussian lived and died a king.

CHOISEUL BANISHES THE JESUITS (1764 A.D.)

Although lost in the noise and events of foreign war, the underplot of domestic politics, the struggle betwixt the Jesuits and high churchmen on the one side, and the parliament, the men of letters, and the public voice on the other, was continued with unabated inveteracy. The sovereign interfered from time to time in these disputes, through the influence of La Pompadour, who from her life and station, as well as from her liberality, was opposed to the church party and the dauphin. The clergy were censured, and the prelates exiled. The opposition of the parliament, however, against papal and sacerdotal usurpation, was confounded with that which it offered to taxes and fiscal edicts; and when this latter species of frowardness became troublesome, the court was compelled to punish the magistrates, and give an apparent triumph to the high church.

The menaced encroachment of the parliaments upon the sovereign power was interrupted, in the first place, by the minister Choiseul, who took the part of the legists, and who adroitly made them desist from such pretensions by allowing them a complete triumph over their immediate enemies, the clergy. The duke de Choiseul was an exception to the long succession

[1 "If the American War some twenty years later made the French soldier a republican, the Seven Years' War destroyed all the honour and credit of the French noblesse; their vices, incapacity, and folly were displayed on an open field." —KITCHIN.]

of ministerial mediocrity. Extremely ugly, his conversation and address soon removed the disagreeable impression made by his appearance. He had the boldness, the nationalism, the independence, of the first Pitt.

The Jesuits, instituted to support sacerdotal authority, proved the principal cause of its overthrow. Their ambition, their corporate spirit, excited fear and envy; their corruption of morality's plainest principles made them unpopular; and, finally, their efforts to master the throne excited a league of sovereign princes against them, which now produced their complete destruction.

In Portugal, where the reign of the Jesuits seemed most assured, it was a lawyer, the marquis of Pombal, who, arrived at the ministry, undermined and destroyed the order.[1] Divers circumstances reinforced the hatred of the judicial body towards the Jesuits, and their power over them produced the same catastrophe in France. The most eminent of the rising legists drew up reports on the tendency and illegality of such societies. La Chalotais, attorney-general (*procureur-général*) of the province of Brittany, especially distinguished himself by the talent and virulence of his report. A judgment of the parliament of Paris deprived the Jesuits first of the liberty of teaching, or of receiving new proselytes. Great efforts were made to shake Louis XV, and deprive the ministry of his support. The dauphin, the pope, the cardinal of Lorraine exerted themselves to this effect. But the duke de Choiseul, supported by Madame de Pompadour, succeeded in carrying his point. The order of the Jesuits was abolished in 1764, and its members banished the kingdom.

There was a sad and unfortunate similarity in the positions of Louis XV and of Louis XIV in the latter part of their respective reigns. Both, unsuccessful in their wars, had been reduced to a disgraceful peace: both to this great cause of unpopularity joined a secluded and dissolute life; for Madame de Maintenon, in the eyes of the people, could never be other than a royal mistress. The same splendour, the same misery, profusion in expense, poverty in finances, marked the conclusion of either reign. Both monarchs were doomed to see their children perish by an unaccountable decay, and to have the prospect of their crowns falling on the head of an infant. The people murmured to behold the pious and the young carried off, whilst the aged and licentious monarch survived. Suspicions of poison and foul play circulated. That horrid credulity, which loads royalty with every crime, then became prevalent in France: it soon swelled into a fatal prejudice.[c]

THE LAST DAYS OF POMPADOUR

Madame de Pompadour had preserved an influence over the king which could only be compared to that which Cardinal Fleury had exercised before her. She assumed with him the tone of a respectful and courageous friendship. Despite the loss of freshness, her beauty had preserved an imposing quality and by the dignity of her manners she succeeded in obtaining oblivion for all that was shameful in her position. She contrived to awe even Marshal Richelieu, whilst the prince de Soubise and other great nobles were proud of being called her friends. She showed respect towards the queen; but, angry at having been unable to overcome the dauphin's contempt, she kept the court alive to his absurdities, spoke of his hair-shirt, his scourge, his secret withdrawals for the purpose of reciting his breviary in

[1 The story of the general rising against Jesuitism has been fully told in the history of Portugal.]

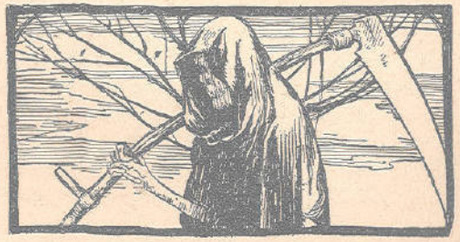
the garb of a Jesuit. As to the princesses, the king's daughters, she had accustomed them to show outward respect to her as the monarch's choice.

Always an actress, always bent on playing her part, she lived in a continual agitation; she took it much to heart that she was the object of the nation's hatred, a fact that she could not disguise from herself, and this distress increased a malady peculiar to her sex which had attacked her. A man whom she had raised to power, the duke de Choiseul, who was suspected of having been her lover, had easily attained to the popularity which she could not win. It was she who was blamed for the war, whilst it was to the duke de Choiseul that the nation believed itself indebted for the peace.

The secret malady which was undermining the strength of Madame de Pompadour had manifested itself in the spring of 1764 in acute sufferings. The court was then at Choisy; but in spite of the etiquette which permitted no individual who was not of the blood to die in the palace, Louis XV had her conducted to Versailles: already she was aware of her danger and her one thought was to die like a queen. She therefore continued to have the interests of the state discussed before her and to procure the nomination to various offices of those persons to whom she accorded the last signs of her favour. She had too much regard for public consideration not to fulfil the requirements of the church in her last moments at the same time that she endeavoured to preserve to the end the approbation of the *philosophes*. Her pride refused the tears of penitence; and yet the clergy showed themselves respectful towards the expiring favourite. She had several interviews with her *curé*, and when he would have withdrawn after the last: "Wait, *monsieur le curé*," she said to him, "we will leave here together." She did actually die that very day, the 15th of April, 1764.

It is affirmed that Louis shed no tear, did not seem pensive, nor seek for solitude. It is even related that being at his window when the remains of Madame de Pompadour were leaving the courts of the château he was heard to pronounce these words: "Madame la Marquise will have bad weather for her journey to-day." Madame de Pompadour was then forty-four years old; she left all her property to her brother, the marquis de Marigny; the husband she had abandoned disdained to receive the smallest share of that rich inheritance.

The dauphin soon followed the favourite to whom he had allowed his contempt to be too plainly visible. He expired the 20th of December, 1765, at the age of thirty-six years. The son who, eight years later, was to succeed to the crown under the name of Louis XVI, was then only eleven years old. The exclamation of Louis XV when this child, coming into his room, was announced for the first time under the name of Monseigneur le Dauphin, was treasured as a sign of feeling on the part of a man who had given scarcely a token of possessing any. Poor France! a king fifty-five years old and a dauphin of eleven![3]



CHAPTER III

THE LAST DECADE OF LOUIS XV

[1764–1774 A.D.]

As Pope Benedict XIV said, "Is there need of any further proof of the existence of a Providence than the sight of France prospering under Louis XV?" — BESENVAL.[4]

ON the death of his son, the dauphin, Louis, in a frenzy of grief, returned to the queen, behaved affectionately towards his virtuous daughters, closed the Parc-aux-Cerfs, and had no longer any declared mistress. The courtiers feared lest a confessor should take the place of a favourite. But this return to rectitude did not last long: the queen was soon forgotten and neglected again, and died some time afterwards worn out by grief (June 25th, 1768); her father, the good Stanislaus, who had procured for Lorraine thirty years of peace and prosperity, preceded her to the tomb (February 3rd, 1766). Then the king plunged once more into his crapulous debauchery, the Parc-aux-Cerfs was reopened; he became completely estranged from his people, holding himself quite aloof from public affairs, amusing himself by listening to scandal and police reports, shamefully amassing money for his own private use by stock-jobbing, spying on his ministers, and letting state affairs go on as best they could.

Choiseul, when the marquise de Pompadour (1764) and the dauphin (1765) were both dead, seemed destined to become prime minister; he tried to make people forget the dishonourable origin of his elevation to power, by throwing all the odium of the unpopular Seven Years' War upon Madame de Pompadour. He was the only one of the ministers of this period who seemed to have clear ideas and plans, and a definite purpose. People were inclined to look upon him as a great man destined to rejuvenate monarchy, to abolish abuses, and to raise the standing of France in the eyes of the world. Such were indeed his plans, but he did nothing. The politics of this period seemed to be absolutely incapable of construction or even of repair. Besides, Choiseul was less a statesman than courtier and wit. Nevertheless, if he showed little ability in his home policy, he thoroughly understood the foreign interests of the country. With striking sagacity, he foresaw that the two powers which threatened the liberty of

Europe were Great Britain at sea and Russia on the continent; all his efforts, therefore, were directed against these two countries.

He tried to form a league of naval powers against Great Britain, to take advantage of the troubles existing in her colonies, and to rehabilitate the French navy. He first tried to make sure of the alliance of the states of the house of Bourbon, united by the Family Compact, and especially of Spain, where his friend De Aranda was making noble efforts to bring about reform. He then attempted to insure the alliance of the two countries which England regarded as her vassals: Portugal, which country the marquis of Pombal[1] was endeavouring to set free from a shameful servitude, and Holland, where the republican party was indignant at the humiliation of the national flag, and at the servile dependence of the stadholders. Lastly he tried to make sure, if not of the alliance at least of the neutrality of Prussia and Austria.

The Seven Years' War having seriously affected the finances of England, the ministry attempted to improve them by making the colonies for which they had been fighting (1765) share in the taxation of the mother country. They laid arbitrary taxes on colonial commerce and a stamp duty was decreed by parliament on all transactions. The American colonies declared that as they were not represented in the English parliament, they could not be taxed by it. Disturbances arose in the large towns, and rebellion seemed imminent. The colonists even began to turn their eyes towards France in expectation of assistance. Choiseul saw in this crisis an opportunity for the maritime war which he desired to bring about; he secretly incited the Americans to resistance, and did all he could, even spending money in this cause, to foment existing troubles.

Choiseul, while following the course of all these troubles, so favourable to his plans, devoted the greatest energy to the re-establishment of the navy. He gave an excellent government to the Antilles; and Santo Domingo became the most flourishing colony on the face of the earth, a source of immense wealth to France. He attempted to colonise Guiana; but failed completely in that pestilential climate to which thousands of men were sent out only to die. Lastly he made an acquisition of great value, namely, Corsica.

Corsica had, during the Middle Ages, fallen under the dominion of the Genoese; but the mountaineers of the interior, a wild and courageous population, had never recognised the Genoese as their masters, and had maintained a continual struggle against them. When the maritime power of Genoa declined, the Corsican insurrection became extended and consolidated, and at last, after many risings, succeeded in driving the Genoese troops from the island. The republic demanded help from France, who forced the Corsicans to accept again the dominion of their former rulers (1735). But when the French quitted the island, the rebellion again broke out; the Corsicans freely enrolled themselves under Pasquale Paoli, a man of genius, and attempted to form an independent state. Genoa, being too weak to subdue these rebellious vassals, again appealed to France for help. France agreed to act as mediator, and invested the ports with French troops (1763). The mountaineers refused to submit and appealed for help to England.

Had England succeeded in taking possession of an island situated only a few hours' journey from Toulon, she would have had a citadel at the gates

[1 Kitchin[b] comments on this period: "It is customary to speak of the enlightened sovereigns of this time; it would be fully as correct to call it the age of enlightened ministers. Pitt with George III, Pombal ruling in Portugal, Aranda in Spain, Choiseul at the court of Louis XV, are quite as characteristic of the age as Joseph II or Frederick the Great."]

of France as she already had one at the gates of Spain. With Corsica, Minorca, and Gibraltar, she would have driven the French and the Spanish from a sea which seems naturally to belong to them. Such an event must be prevented at any price. Choiseul made up his mind to gain Corsica for France, and not only to make of it a colony which would be valuable on account of its situation, its harbours, and its forests, but, in spite of its position, language, and customs, to make it an integral part of French territory. A treaty was concluded by which the Genoese ceded Corsica to Louis XV, who called himself its king and decreed the union of the island with France, August 15th, 1768.

The Corsicans, indignant at being sold without their consent, made an energetic resistance; but Choiseul having sent fifty battalions against them, while England remained deaf to their appeal, they were obliged to yield. Two months after the cessation of hostilities, and a year after the edict of union, Napoleon Bonaparte was born at Ajaccio (August 15th, 1769).

The Poles rose in 1768 and formed a confederation at Bar [in Podolia] "for the defence of liberty and religion." The Russians and king Stanislaus, with those who dissented from the Romish church, marched against the insurgents, appealed to all Europe for help, and exposed the Macchiavellism of Catherine. Prussia had already pledged itself secretly to Russia; Austria maintained a hypocritical neutrality; Sweden, ruled by its aristocracy, who were in the czarina's pay, remained passive. France was the only power left who could save Poland; and the czarina hoped through the influence of England, with whom she had formed a close friendship, to prevent French interference. Choiseul had protested against the election of Stanislaus; he sent subsidies, officers, and engineers to the confederates at Bar; incited Maria Theresa to check the ambition of the barbarians of the north; urged Gustavus III, king of Sweden, to shake off the yoke of his aristocracy; finally he persuaded Turkey to begin hostilities. He would have liked France to declare herself openly on the side of the Polish insurgents and to send her fleets to the Baltic and the Mediterranean. But it was too great an undertaking to help both Poles and Americans against two powers who would certainly form an alliance and perhaps oppose France helped by Prussia and Austria. Louis XV trembled at the idea of the universal war that he foresaw. His finances were in a most disastrous condition, and though the minister had vanquished the Jesuit party, he had not been able to abolish their dissensions and their intrigues. He could not stand up against so many obstacles, and his failure involved the ruin of Poland.[c]

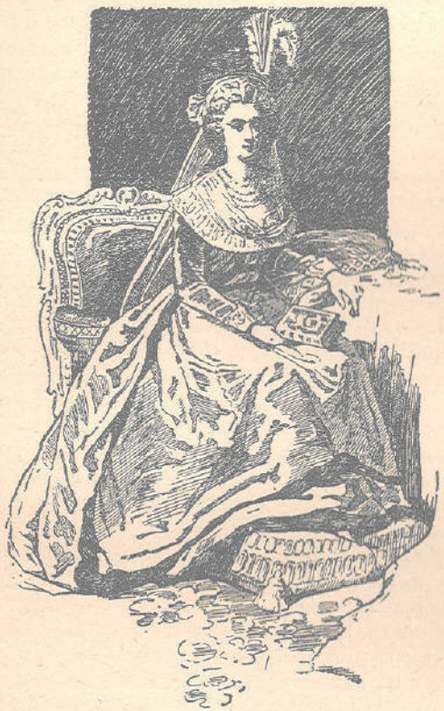
By the death of the dauphin in 1765, Louis XV's eldest grandson (afterwards Louis XVI) became dauphin of France; and from that time Choiseul entered into the views of the court of Vienna to betroth the young dauphin with the Austrian princess Marie Antoinette. In this way he gained the interest and favour of the court of Vienna, but irritated and incensed the most powerful and patriotic part of his own nation against himself. Choiseul sacrificed everything in internal administration also to the necessity of maintaining his position at the head of the government. Although he was the creature of Pompadour, and had humbled himself before her, yet he was a man of education and had some honour to lose, and must therefore have found the task of maintaining himself in the king's favour yearly more difficult, because the latter continued to sink deeper and deeper, and Richelieu, Aiguillon, and other fashionable profligates were his daily companions.

It was unfortunate that the king did not, after Pompadour's death, immediately find a woman who was qualified to fill her place, to rule the monarch

with unlimited sway, and to be somewhat observant of the outward decencies of life. Neither the young women with whom they were accustomed to furnish the king's seraglio, nor Mademoiselle St. Romans, who enjoyed his favour for a longer period than the others, was able to exercise that power over him which his habits and his indulgences required.

EVILS OF THE PARLIAMENTS

Since the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the parliaments had carried on a constant struggle with the court respecting the Jesuits, the taxes, the registration of the royal edicts, and other affairs; but in the last four years of the reign of Louis XV these contentions assumed the precise form of those disputes into which George III had fallen with the corporation of London since the Peace of Paris. In France at this time all the rights and privileges of the estates, corporations, and of individual citizens were at the mercy of the most contemptible and scandalous men and women who were favourites at court; and therefore the boldest orators of the public tribunals were universally regarded as the defenders of the rights of the people, which they were not in any respect, nor could they be.



MARIE ANTOINETTE

The great judicial courts of ancient France determined the causes which came before them in the king's name, but wholly independent of his influence, as the imperial courts of Germany did, and often even decided against him. The presence of the peers and princes of the blood in Paris moreover gave to the parliament of Paris, on particular occasions, all the dignity and pre-eminence of the Carlovingian tribunals; they were therefore called, in the same sense as the word was applied to the king, sovereign courts (*cours souveraines*). Parliament was divided into a great number of chambers, and had therefore many councillors, presidents, hundreds of secretaries, procurators, barristers, attorneys, and inferior officers: in the time of the League and the Fronde it had a whole army of writers in its service, whose name (*la basoche*) always continued to be a subject of dread in times of public commotion. As the office of a councillor of parliament was only to be had by the payment of a certain sum into the public treasury, the interest of which amounted to something like the salary to be received, or, in fact, was only to be bought, these councillors formed a peculiar species of aristocracy, and the places were hereditary in families like advowsons in England. This parliamentary

aristocracy was at all times a matter of apprehension to the ministers of the crown, because the court must necessarily employ the instrumentality of this powerful body in communicating the royal edicts to the inferior courts and magistrates. All these edicts therefore must be read before the court and recorded; and this furnished the parliaments with a pretence for raising objections. There was no other body or person who was in any way justified in preferring complaints against any measures of the government whatsoever; and no one dared to venture on such a course, or the consequence would have been immediate imprisonment by virtue of a *lettre de cachet*.

The parliament of Paris enjoyed greater distinction than the other parliaments, on account of its sittings being held in the capital.

The parliament embraced a chamber of taxes and a high court of exchequer in itself; and what was called the registration of decrees respecting new impositions always led to long debates, refusals, and protests, and, from want of a free press, the parliament finally became the only organ of public opinion. The parliament formed an opposition against the ministers of the crown, which of itself gave a degree of political importance to their struggles in favour of the Jansenists, which were often in the highest degree ridiculous, because the court had formed an alliance with Rome and the Jesuits against the persecuted Jansenists, whom the parliament took under their protection. The parliaments besides contended much more vehemently against the spirit of the age and the prevailing opinions which favoured frivolity and sentimentality, under the name of philosophy, than the ministers of the court, among whom Choiseul in particular solicited and courted the friendship of Voltaire as eagerly as Frederick the Great or Catherine II.

The spirit which reigned in the parliaments, and among the learned scholastic theologians and theological jurists of whom it was composed, was completely the same as the tone of puritanism which prevailed in England in the years immediately preceding the English Revolution. No real improvement, no restoration of the relaxed order which had taken place in the political and moral condition of the country, no legislation suited to the spirit of the age and commensurate with the demands of the public, was to be expected from the parliaments and their jurists.

At a later period the parliaments opposed the king's government, when the latter was desirous of abolishing those detestable and barbarous laws by which, even after the time of the American War, the pious clergy among the reformers were liable to be condemned to the galleys if they ventured to preach to their congregations. The parliament also strictly prohibited such books as Rousseau's *Héloïse* and *Émile*, which were in everyone's hands, and regarded as the pride of the nation, and issued a decree of personal arrest against the author, who was protected and countenanced by a prince of the blood, some of the most distinguished peers, and all the fashionable ladies of Paris, notwithstanding and in contempt of these decrees.

The wars which the well-armed combatants in parliament had carried on respecting dogmas and discipline, Jansenism and Jesuitism, reached their termination immediately after the Seven Years' War; on the other hand, political contentions increased in violence just in proportion as the king sank deeper in incapacity and immorality, and fell into worse hands. The king, and the clever profligates by whom he was continually surrounded, pushed the principle of autocracy and of the divine properties of royal blood to the most revolting extent, as may be seen from the disgrace and incarceration inflicted upon such miserable rhetoricians as Marmontel and Morellet for some insignificant expressions. King Louis, who was an enemy to all

innovation, was compelled, by the resistance of the parliaments to his royal commands, in the last years of his life, to fall in with the spirit of the age, to act in opposition to the conservative principles of the parliaments: first, in reference to philosophical and political economy; and secondly, in reference to the reformation of the whole system of judicial administration.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN KING AND PARLIAMENT

As respects the latter point, Louis' zeal by no means sprang from a wish to reform the court, or to act in accordance with the requirements of the age, but simply from a feeling of dislike to the parliaments. Before the end of the Seven Years' War, his royal autocracy had, as we have seen, suffered a defeat from the judicial power of these corporations, which had descended to them from the feudal times, when he attempted to maintain and carry through his Jesuitical papism in opposition to the parliaments, which were zealous defenders of the Jansenist fanaticism.

At the same time the speeches and debates in parliament, to whose sittings the public was admitted, had become so bold and daring that the hearers might readily suppose themselves removed to the times of the Fronde. Pompadour and her creatures had been attacked in the strongest language; references were made to the fundamental laws of the old French constitution; and learned investigations were carried on to see if the ministers of the crown were justified by any law of the ancient constitution in exercising absolute power in the name of the king in the way in which they had hitherto done.

These discussions and inquiries naturally led to the conclusion that, even under an absolute and despotical government, the life, freedom, and property of the citizens ought to be inviolate, or only affected by legal forms, if a despot were not desirous of undermining his own throne; the violation of these natural rights was however daily perpetrated in France by means of arbitrary letters of arrest under the royal seal (*lettres de cachet*), of which there were but too many proofs.

These royal warrants were at the disposal of every minister of the crown; and not only every minister, but every person who had influence at court could avail himself of these means of tyranny and terror to seize upon and imprison a disobedient son, a troublesome relative or creditor, or an author who had given him any offence. Whenever this dreadful seal was exhibited to any public man, it denoted a living death; it marked him at once as a person for whom there was neither examination nor court of justice, neither protection nor help to be expected from his family or any of his friends.

The government had scarcely restored peace between the parliament and the clergy when they had again fallen into a bitter contest with the parliament. In this new dispute very violent measures had been adopted by Machault, minister of marine, and D'Argenson, keeper of the seals, the former a friend of Pompadour, and the latter her detestation. The parliament, now threatened by military compulsion, had not only called in the peers to its consultations, but hit upon a plan which would have converted the dispute with the parliament of Paris into a war with the whole parliamentary nobility (*noblesse de robe*) of the kingdom. It was alleged as a principle that all the sovereign legal courts in France constituted only one body, of which the parliament of Paris was the soul; or, as it was expressed, that all the other parliaments belonged as classes to that of Paris.

The ministers immediately perceived the danger of this doctrine, and caused the king in person publicly to prohibit the enunciation of such theories in parliament, and all attempts to give them efficacy by speeches or decrees; or in other words, they caused him twice in the same year, in September and December, 1756, to hold what was called a bed of justice (*lit de justice*), in which the king, in order to convert the parliament into something resembling an ancient assembly of the Franks (*cour plénière*), took his seat after the fashion of the Merovingian kings, with a cushion at his back, cushions under each arm, and one under his feet. Notwithstanding all these pompous and absurd ceremonies and royal sittings, at which etiquette imposed silence upon all those who were present except the king and his chancellor, the parliament had immediately renewed its protest as soon as the king had left the assembly: it had protested against such an invasion of their freedom of deliberation, and utterly refused to acknowledge any resolutions forced upon them by the mere personal authority of the sovereign. This gave rise to new contentions; some of the chambers which were particularly vehement were abolished; the contest waxed more violent in word and action, and daily encroachments were made upon the political influence of the parliament by royal decrees.

Machault and D'Argenson were removed. The contest between the clergy and the parliament, however, was still carried on for a considerable time under the succeeding ministers, till at length the second dispute ended like the first. All the chambers of the parliament were restored to their former functions, and in September, 1757, everything had been re-established on its previous footing. The financial edicts which were afterwards laid before parliament were in reality mere extortions, which only furnished means for the moment, and in the last case were only further impositions inflicted upon those classes of the subjects already oppressed with taxes, feudal services, tithes, salt-duties, and a poll-tax: the consequence was that the parliament had been only two years restored to its rights when a new contest arose. Machault was obliged to sacrifice his place as minister of finance, because he ventured to propose to the parliament the recognition and approval of a species of taxation, the burden of which would have fallen chiefly upon the privileged classes, of which the parliament for the most part was composed; his successors therefore, who did not venture to think upon the introduction of any species of improvement, were obliged to help themselves out by extortions.

The three ministers who immediately succeeded Machault, *viz.*, Moreau de Sechelles, Moras, and Boulogne, although they had recourse to all possible means of raising money to meet the expenses of war and the extravagance of the court, had found themselves reduced to inextricable difficulties; they were replaced by a man supposed to be more fertile in expedients, and better disposed to act with greater boldness against the parliament and public opinion. This man was Étienne de Silhouette.

Silhouette had commenced his official career by a measure which had been equally a matter of rejoicing to the extravagant court, to Pompadour, and the oppressed people, and therefore appeared to do what was really incredible; he raised 72,000,000 livres without laying any new burdens upon the people; for it appeared as if he took the money out of the purses of the farmers-general, who were the blood-suckers of the nation. But when his first means of resource were exhausted, he too had fallen into a war with the parliament, and was able to maintain himself for only eight months in his position. Before he retired from his office he even renewed the measure

to which recourse had been previously taken in the time of the financial stringencies of the regency, by which every man was compelled to send all his silver plate to the mint.

By Silhouette's removal from the ministry of finance a sort of truce had been purchased between the government and parliament, but this proved of the shorter continuance, as at this very time Choiseul had been appointed to the helm of affairs, who knew well how to avail himself of parliament in a most diplomatic manner for the promotion of his own private views, in order to make himself important and indispensable to the king. The parliament was then carrying on an unceasing contention with the court, sometimes about taxes, sometimes about Jansenism, sometimes about the Jesuits, and finally on account of the favourite and companion of the king, the duke d'Aiguillon. We must dwell upon this last-mentioned ground of dispute a little more in detail, because it ultimately led to the abolition of the parliament. After the death of the marquise de Pompadour, the duke d'Aiguillon first fell into a dispute with the parliament of Rennes, and secondly with that of Paris, which involved him in transactions from which he could not extricate himself even by the favour of the king.

LADY OF THE COURT OF LOUIS XV

The duke d'Aiguillon possessed what was then considered as the chief ornament of a courtier — pre-eminence in every sin ; he was inseparable from the king's orgies, and notwithstanding his insolence and pride, did homage to every clever courtesan who acquired influence and dominion over the aged monarch ; along with all this, he, like the king, was zealous for the cause of the pope and the clergy, for the ceremonies and external forms of religion. When commandant of Brittany, he played the sultan in every respect, and pushed that sort of criminality and licentiousness in which he indulged in company with the king in Paris and at Versailles to such an incredible extent that no age was a protection against his passions, and he even violated the sanctuary of the convent.

The parliament of Brittany, following the example of that of Paris, was filled with indignation at his conduct, and resisted the various taxes which he wished to impose ; the duke treated its members in the most brutal manner. The distinguished but somewhat vehement attorney-general, La Chalotais, was persecuted by him with irreconcilable hatred.

It was discovered that the money which had been voted for the repair and maintenance of the highways had been applied by the duke to a different purpose, and the parliament commenced a suit against him for the misapplication and embezzlement of the public money. The end of it was that La Chalotais was sent by the parliament to Paris to endeavour to induce the king to recall the duke from Brittany, with an assurance that a recall would

immediately put an end to the dispute between the estates and the first officer of the government.

In the course of this contest the duke behaved in such a despotical manner, and the compulsory measures to which he had recourse were in such flagrant violation of existing rights, that the most distinguished councillors sent in their resignations. The estates of Brittany, that is especially that of the third estate, and the towns forgot the cause of the Jesuits, and resolved to unite with the parliament in defence of their civil rights.

On the express orders of the king, the duke d'Aiguillon suddenly arrested the attorney-general, La Chalotais, his son, and five other councillors of parliament, on the night of the 10th of November, 1765.

The absurd and wholly undefined charges contained in the king's letters-patent (*lettres patentes*) were to form the ground of a judicial inquiry and prosecution ; the object was to force the parliament of Rennes to prosecute those who had been arrested by the king's command, and thus to punish its own members who resigned their offices as councillors. The numerous councillors who had sent in their resignations declared that they persisted in their determination, and many others now joined in their declaration. It was found necessary altogether to give up any semblance of a regular parliamentary tribunal, and to have recourse to a species of military commission. New letters-patent was issued for the formation of a royal commission, before whom the prisoners were to be tried in St. Malo, as before a court of king's bench. The commission sat in the end of January, 1766, and they were about to pronounce the sentence of death which had been sent to them ready made from Versailles, when some urgent remonstrances, sent by the parliament of Paris, deterred the king from his design ; Choiseul also roused his conscience on the point, and represented to him the extreme danger of the course he was about to pursue. The sentence of death, as well as the whole of the proceedings, was annulled, and on the 17th of February, 1766, the case was again referred to the natural and legal judges of the accused : these judges were the members of the parliament of Rennes ; as this however was now nothing more than a rump parliament, owing to many resignations, La Chalotais refused to acknowledge it as competent. This refusal was not only well founded in reason, but also in law ; the parliament was servile and mutilated, and the attorney-general appealed to an ordinance of 1737 in which express provision was made for such contingencies.

The king now issued an order under the great seal in November, 1766, by which the whole prosecution was declared to be at an end by his majesty's command. Notwithstanding this royal decision, the king's displeasure was manifested towards La Chalotais, his son, and four councillors of parliament, by ordering them to be banished to Saintes.

The estates of Brittany, the parliament, and the duke d'Aiguillon in the meantime were at open war, and not a month elapsed which was not distinguished by some acts of violence, by attacks upon existing rights, and instances of banishment or incarceration. In the course of three months, Aiguillon's uncle, the minister in Paris, obtained no less than 130 *lettres de cachet*, which he sent to his nephew in Brittany, where they were used as instruments of tyranny and terror against the first persons in the country. Choiseul was opposed to the ambition of both uncle and nephew, but sought to maintain his credit with both parties. The king was at length persuaded of the wisdom of recalling Aiguillon from Brittany. The parliament was then restored to the full exercise of all its former privileges and rights, and the councillors or members of the estates, who had been prosecuted,

imprisoned, or banished by Aiguillon, were restored to liberty and their friends. These events took place in 1768, and in the year immediately following the scandals of the court led to a new and violent war with the parliament.[d]

DU BARRY THE NEW FAVOURITE

A courtier, who was one of the king's intimates, one day made the acquaintance of a young woman of low birth named Lange, and was immediately struck by her surpassing beauty. He lost no time in recommending her to the notice of that one of the king's chamberlains to whom the oversight and management of such affairs was peculiarly entrusted. She was in consequence brought to the palace, and so patent to all observers was the complete ascendency which very soon she gained by her arts over the king that feelings of disgust and abhorrence were excited in the minds of all except those courtiers who were privy to it. These sentiments were intensified when it became known that she was received in the royal palace and occupied apartments which had hitherto been appropriated to a queen. The whole court was made to do homage to her as they formerly had done to Pompadour: she was ennobled and married to the brother of the courtier who had brought her to notice. She was presented at court as the Countess du Barry (1769), and her sudden rise to power from an obscure position became the scandal of the moment.

Capefigue's Defence of Du Barry

What was the true origin of the countess du Barry? If we are to accept the version of her story given by the Choiseul coterie, she was born at Vaucouleurs, 1745,[1] and was called Jeanne Vaubernier; perhaps they wished to suggest a trick or caprice of fortune, for Vaucouleurs was the birthplace of the chaste heroine of Orleans, and they wished to emphasise perhaps the contrast between the woman whom they represented as a prostitute and the noble maiden who saved France. The witty society of the eighteenth century delighted in such antitheses. Jeanne Vaubernier came to Paris and entered a milliner's establishment under the name of Mademoiselle Lange; there is no proof of the metamorphoses, the passing liaisons, the debauches which are attributed to the milliner's girl with her bandbox and her mob-cap. But the street songs of M. Choiseul and the ditties of M. de Maurepas have asserted them, and they have been received and believed.

Suddenly this Mademoiselle Lange became the wife of the count du Barry, a member of a noble and worthy family. Was it a love match, an overwhelming passion for a pretty girl? Not at all. It was a greedy speculation, the shameful calculation of a dissipated man. M. du Barry married a prostitute in order to offer her to a king sated with pleasure. Such is the hideous legend circulated by the Choiseul party about the countess du Barry. Must it be accepted as true? When the members of a faction depict the character of one who is in opposition to them, they seem to delight in painting it in the blackest hues. This may possibly have been done in the case of the countess du Barry. I do not say that this woman did not resemble others of her time, that she did not possess the vices of that dissolute period; but why should her character be so vindictively attacked and held up to the

[1 There is a dispute as to this date; the Goncourts give 1743, and the *Biographie Universelle*, 1744.]

MADAME DU BARRY SITTING TO PAJOU FOR HER PORTRAIT BUST
(From the painting by Cain)

[1769 A.D.]

execration of posterity? Was it not sufficient that she was the declared and adulterous mistress of an enervated king — was not that enough stain upon her honour? Let us remember that this countess du Barry was, after the death of Louis XV, the most unselfish friend and follower of the court, and that she devoted herself most nobly to the royal family; she sacrificed all her diamonds and her fortune, nay, she even gave her life for her two idols, Marie Antoinette and the chivalrous duke de Brissac, whom she deeply loved.

In the picture painted by the last of the Vanloos, you may have noticed a shepherdess of rare grace and beauty, with a noble and lofty brow, almond-shaped black eyes under arched eyebrows, a small, perfectly rounded nose, rosy lips half open, showing beautiful pearly teeth, a long oval face such as we find in the Vandyke portraits of the Stuarts, and besides all this a beautifully moulded bust and an exquisite slender form, rendered more striking by the glow of youth and happiness which emanates from the whole personality. This is the portrait of the countess du Barry when, at the age of twenty-four, she was presented at court, in 1769, by a respected and well-born lady, the countess of Béarn.

What struck the courtiers — and this is acknowledged by the most bitter enemies of the countess du Barry — was the look of graceful modesty which seemed to pervade her whole person. One of the old followers of M. de Choiseul expressed himself more strongly, saying: "Far from taking her to be the king's mistress, you would have thought she was a little school-girl who had just made her first communion."

Without entering into the mysteries of their private life, what particularly charmed Louis XV was this mingling of childlike simplicity with a caustic though not ill-natured wit, and a certain firmness and nervous energy which never failed her when necessary. Weak characters always like to be surrounded by people who possess a great deal of energy, and when that energy is united with a lovely face, it assures the success of a measure which has been thought out while the thinker was smiling behind her fan.

Louis XV soon became quite devoted to Madame du Barry. He resumed his former habits, his little suppers, bright with many candles, his freedom, and his familiar ease. The countess du Barry was gifted with a quick and lively faculty for repartee; she also had an admirable gift of reaching the very heart of a question by a witticism, often very forcibly and boldly expressed. The king would laugh like a child at her sallies; and to be able to give an old man a few moments of forgetfulness and amusement is to establish an immense influence over him. The king's privy council, led by the duke d'Aiguillon, clearly saw how useful Madame du Barry's growing influence might prove. The duke made himself the close ally of Madame du Barry, who from this moment was considered as the enemy of the Choiseul party. It has been said that this ill feeling arose from the fact that the duke of Choiseul had refused, from moral scruples, to acknowledge and bow down before the power of the new favourite. M. de Choiseul had not always had such scruples. Who had brought him into power? Another favourite, Madame de Pompadour. And also had not M. de Choiseul hoped that his own sister, the duchess of Grammont, might attract the notice of Louis XV?

The question of morality counted for nothing. This hatred was instinctive and easily explained. Madame du Barry, who was henceforth the organ of the privy council, had a great dislike for the methods which allowed the members of parliament to gain so much power, and which showed so much respect for authors and philosophers; she attacked M. de Choiseul at every

point. A butt for the minister's street songs, compelled to hear *La Belle Bourbonnaise* — a song entirely directed against her — sung daily under her windows, the young countess avenged herself by smart sayings. Having one day dismissed her cook because the king complained of a dish, she wittily said: "Sire, I have dismissed my Choiseul; when will you do the same with yours?" Another time she took as a symbol the coffee which was boiling over, to put into forcible language her conviction that the affairs of state were going to wrack and ruin. This was the way to please the king. He would laugh heartily at such pleasantries. But her attacks told, and the power of the secret council increasing, Choiseul's ministry and particularly M. de Maupeou, were bowing before the influence of the new favourite.[e]

A French Peasant

FINANCIAL TYRANNIES

For twelve years Choiseul had dealt with the kingdom and its finances with the greatest French frivolity, as if they had constituted the mere private concerns of the king. Before he retired he brought into the ministry one of the most hard-hearted and most audacious calculators who had been employed to drain the pockets of the people in France since the times of Émery. The abbé Terray, chosen minister of finance at the end of the year 1769, was a man wholly destitute of all feelings of humanity and compassion, and possessed a countenance as insensible to emotion as those of Lord North, Talleyrand, and other diplomatic *virtuosi*. During the last years of the reign of Louis XV this man reduced the finances and the kingdom, whose credit was wholly destroyed, to such a condition that he himself openly admitted that he knew of no further means of supply, and yet, although all other payments were suspended, he caused Du Barry's allowance of 60,000 francs a month, which were appropriated by the king to this infamous courtesan, to be regularly paid.

Maupeou continued to be first president of the parliament till 1768, when he was appointed chancellor; he then became the most violent opponent of the parliament over which he had previously presided. Terray also engaged in a contest with the parliament. He published a number of edicts, by which all the payments then due were stopped, the payment of the bills

drawn upon the farmers-general of the taxes refused, the interest due upon sums borrowed retained in the treasury, and the payment of the sums accumulating as a sinking-fund obstructed. He did not even stop here, but seized upon the moneys accumulated in the savings-banks; and whilst he allowed all other yearly salaries to remain unpaid, he continued to furnish the means for paying the royal pensioners and favourites. He withheld the payment of all the officers and servants of the state, because all the cash which could be collected was necessary for the supply of the king's privy purse, from which not a farthing was allowed to be taken for the expenditure of the state; and this ready money was used as a means of making speculations for the king's personal advantage.

One of the chief questions of French political economy at that time was the trade in corn, which, like every other description of intercourse and commerce, was subjected to numerous restrictions; Terray appeared of a sudden in 1768 to do homage to what was then regarded a most liberal principle, by setting it free from all restrictions; but in fact this free trade in corn was laid hold of as a means of some of the most scandalous speculations which were ever undertaken by a king for the benefit of his private resources. The bread of the poor and necessitous was made an object of royal speculation, not with a view to cheapen the price of bread to the poor, but to make it dearer; the blood-sucker who devised this "Famine Compact" was rich in various knowledge. No one among the privileged classes at that time suspected that the minister of finance, and afterwards the chancellor, by their measures drove through all the veins of the people that maddening hatred to a system of absolute monarchical government, which burst forth with such irrepressible violence and barbarous rage twenty years afterwards, precisely because it had been so long and so powerfully repressed.

THE PARLIAMENTS DEFY THE KING

Since his recall from Brittany the duke d'Aiguillon had been the inseparable companion of the king and his mistress. In order to have a privileged access to all the orgies of the palace, he had obtained the situation of commandant of the hussars of the royal guard; but the revenge of the parliament of Rennes followed him even to Versailles. The parliament declared that they were in a condition to furnish documentary evidence to prove that the duke, as governor of Brittany, had been guilty of suborning false witnesses against his enemies in the parliament, and even of attempting the lives of some of the councillors by poison: this question was now brought forward. A judicial prosecution against him was commenced. The king attempted to put an end to the prosecution, not in the usual way, but by a cabinet order (*arrêt du conseil*). This attempted interference on the part of the king with the usual course of law gave rise to such a violent commotion in the parliament, among the estates of Brittany, and by their means through the whole of France, that the chancellor himself became alarmed. The cause was withdrawn from the parliament of Rennes and referred to that of Paris, in order to deliver Aiguillon from the prosecutions promoted by La Chalotais and his party in a splendid and judicial manner, and to escape the bitter animosities of the whole province of Brittany on account of the violation of one of the chief conditions of their union with France. The king and his party wished to make sure of their cause, and at the same time to give the court the highest degree of solemnity and pomp; the sittings therefore were appointed to be held in the king's presence in Versailles, and the court to be

opened there on the 4th of April (1770). As long as the affair was new to the king, the speaking and procedure might have proved entertaining, but he soon became weary of the court; and besides, a pause in the proceedings took place, on account of the festivities in Paris and Versailles in consequence of the marriage of the Austrian princess Marie Antoinette with the king's grandson, the dauphin. These festivities were unhappily accompanied by a great misfortune and loss of human life.[1]

The parliament was now doubly irritated against the chancellor, the controller-general, and the scandalous proceedings of Aiguillon, Du Barry, and the king, because at this very moment they threatened to ruin and corrupt the successor to the throne also, by introducing the pure-minded bride of the dauphin, and the young dauphin himself, into the sink of pollution into which the palace of Versailles had been recently converted. Parliament therefore sought to revive all the former causes of accusation and contest. The violations of law and justice in the case of La Chalotais were not only brought before the court, but the question was raised and discussed anew, whether the king really possessed the right, by his own sign-manual and personal order (*lettres de cachet*), to seize upon and imprison whomsoever he pleased, and they appeared as if they were disposed to commence a prosecution even against those members of the cabinet who had advised the king in the affair of the parliament of Rennes. These movements excited great anxiety in the cabinet, and the parliament was summoned anew to meet in Versailles, in order to put an end to the prosecution against Aiguillon by a personal dictum of the king.

The parliament was now again about to have its power and privileges destroyed by being called to a royal sitting, in which its members were not allowed either to express their opinions or to give an open vote, and in which the chancellor, who went round and collected the votes in a low tone, could easily make the minority into the majority at his pleasure. It therefore resolved to anticipate the court. In order to prevent Aiguillon's case from being issued a third time by a royal *placet*, the whole parliament, at which the princes and peers were present, declared beforehand, that "they could never regard any accused person, and especially the duke d'Aiguillon, as acquitted when the verdict of acquittal was pronounced at a bed of justice." Notwithstanding this, such a Carlovingian or Merovingian court was held at Versailles on the 27th of June, 1770, in the queen's ante-chambers, on which occasion the young dauphiness, from a loge in one of the chambers, was a spectator of the grand drama of a solemn court of justice.

Upon the king's command and in his presence, it was declared that all the proceedings which had been taken before the parliament in the respective causes of the duke d'Aiguillon, La Chalotais, and Caraduc, were by this deed annulled; and moreover, that no one should hereafter dare either to revive those questions in any form whatsoever, or even to mention them.

Whilst the king was dining in public with Du Barry and Aiguillon in Marly, with the express design of distinguishing the latter by special marks of favour, the supreme court passed a sentence of condemnation upon the man whom the king thus delighted to honour, and in a form of unusual severity. A decree published on the 2nd of July declared the duke to be seriously inculpated and "affected" by suspicions and even by facts, which left a "stain upon his honour"; that he was therefore suspended from the

[1 An enormous crowd gathered to see the fireworks, and the street being torn up, when a panic ensued from an accidental conflagration, over twelve hundred people according to Sismondi[a] and Dareste[b] were trampled to death in the rue Royale.]

enjoyment of all his privileges and functions as a peer, till he was fully acquitted by a court of peers, by a sentence passed after the observance of all the necessary forms prescribed by the laws of the kingdom, "for which nothing could be a substitute." This decree was not only immediately sent to the duke, but upon command of the parliament it was printed, together with the reasons on which it was founded, and ten thousand copies were circulated over the whole kingdom.

The government could not overlook this insulting measure, and the king was personally and grievously offended. On the 3rd of July, the decree of the parliament was formally annulled by the cabinet, and the rights and privileges of the peerage, which had been abrogated by the parliament, were confirmed anew and secured to the duke. This decision of the cabinet (*arrêt du conseil*) was communicated to the parliament in an unusual and most offensive manner. The chancellor, in the presence of the king and before his eyes, was obliged to remove the record from the minutes of parliament which had caused the council to annul the proceedings.

At that time Choiseul was raised in public opinion from being a mere courtier and ambitious intriguer to a patriot, a defender of justice and the laws against the arbitrary dominion of the king. The parliament found friends on the very grounds which afterwards caused Choiseul's banishment to be regarded as a martyrdom. The parliament, with all its intolerance, with its barbarous mode of action and its pedantic forms, appeared as the only bulwark of the people against the most cruel arbitrary dominion, and its boldest declarations against the royal council were received with rejoicing, because such decrees alone and popular ballads opened up an outlet for the free voice of the people, whilst the press was under the strict censorship of the police.

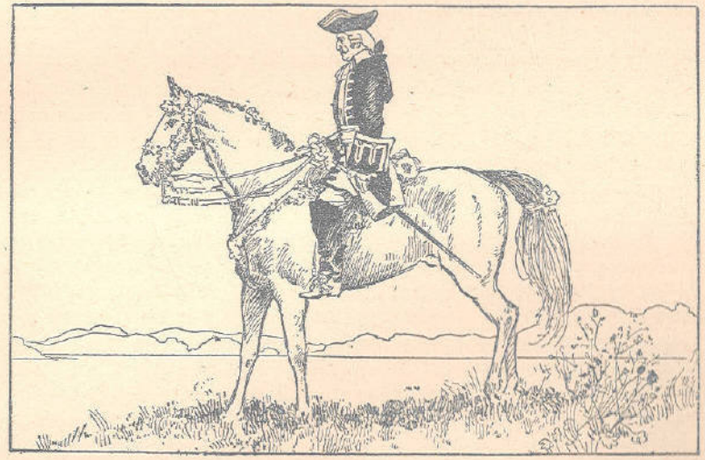
The complete suppression of popular opinion in those years, and the impossibility of finding a free vent for any national feelings, led to the formation of a party which opposed a rude audacity and shameless wit to the boldness of the courtiers and the court, who believed themselves above the reach of any power, protected by bayonets and the police. The extent of their self-deception was first fully experienced by Louis XVI, at the moment when he had need of the support of that public opinion, which his grandfather, with impunity, had despised through his whole life.

The king was prepared for any step, however senseless or bold; for he thought himself so far exalted above the whole nation that he might venture even in these unsettled times to raise the miserable profligate whom he protected and favoured, but who was condemned and disgraced by the parliament, to the dignity of first minister of the crown. This he really did. He also banished Choiseul to his country estate. It was easy to induce such a king to dispense with the services of the chief guardians of existing rights: this was effected by an arbitrary and sudden exercise of power (*coup d'état*) by means of the high police.

The contest between the king and the parliament affected not only the case of Aiguillon, but the main question was, whether in all future times in France the principles of the Turkish and Slavonian governments, which the king publicly and solemnly announced as his own, were to be considered valid, or the rights and privileges of the ancient Franks of German race were to be still defended and maintained. The parliament adhered rigidly to Frankish rights, whilst the king, Aiguillon, and Maupeou maintained the autocratic principle which is the law of Russia and Turkey. If therefore those principles were to be maintained, which his infallible king

had declared in 1766 to be just, and moreover to be his will, Maupeou must necessarily get rid of the ancient parliaments of France.

In 1766 the parliament of Paris declared that all the parliaments of the kingdom were "classes" or "branches" of a corporation, whose duty it was to defend the privileges and laws of "the kingdom": to this declaration the king expressly opposed his own autocracy. He maintained that all his subjects, from the prince to the peasant, were bound to acknowledge his will as the only foundation of justice and law. He alleged that his power was immediately derived from God; which perhaps, under certain conditions, no one would have been disposed to controvert; but it was impossible to acquiesce in the declaration by which it was accompanied, that "he alone was the only source of law and justice, and that for that reason he could or would make no account of a unity of sovereign power in matters of law



FRENCH CAVALRYMAN, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

claimed by the parliament, or of the classes or branches of any such corporation." It was quite impossible for the parliament to concede any such principle as this, and it paid no respect whatever to the claim; Maupeou therefore secretly prepared his measures.

On the 7th of December, 1770, the king appeared in parliament, and in contempt of the decree which it had passed, he first commanded the duke d'Aiguillon to take his seat among the peers of the realm, and then further commanded that the royal decrees which the parliament had previously refused to enter should be now written down and entered upon their records in his presence.

The parliament could not allow this order to be entered on its records without acknowledging the justice of all that was said in the introduction to this sovereign dictum of the king. The royal act was therefore scarcely perfected, when it not only protested but also came to a resolution, to which it was scarcely justified in coming as a mere tribunal of justice; for it was not justified in refusing justice to the people in consequence of its disputes with the king. The parliament suddenly resolved that "in its deep sorrow it must suspend its functions, because the minds and spirits of its members

were too grievously oppressed to enable them to act as judges on questions affecting the property, lives, and honour of their fellow citizens." This resolution indeed compelled the parliament to enter upon a struggle which was neither creditable nor honourable to itself; because the court had here decided in its own cause, and the king, on the other hand, assumed the defence of the people in order to secure a court for the administration of justice.

PARLIAMENT ADJOURNS DECEMBER 7TH, 1770

This struggle and cessation of duties on the part of the court continued for fourteen days, because neither the parliament nor the king would be the first to yield. The king made four attempts to reduce the parliament to obedience; all however in vain. And now Aiguillon, by the instrumentality of Du Barry, was elevated to be prime minister of France. This led to such internal commotions, that public order could only be maintained by military power.

Happily the people did not actively interfere; they only came of age and were ripe for action ten years afterwards; in the meantime they were quiet spectators of a contest carried on between their writers, princes, and parliament on the one hand, and the court on the other, which did not in the least affect their general interests.

As to the princes of the blood, they engaged in the struggle merely because they would have wished to seize upon and exercise the power which Aiguillon possessed; and they were far from entertaining any idea of carrying on a longer struggle for justice and law than their own interests required; they gave proofs, however, that there were persons who could venture openly to resist the king and to answer him rudely, and thereby paved a way for bolder men, which seventeen years after some of them ventured to tread.

The remarkable scene illustrative of this remark, and the personal and public dispute which took place between the king and the duke of Orleans and prince of Conti, stand alone in French history since the time of Louis XIV. The duke of Orleans said to the king, June 27th, 1770, "Since we are not allowed to deliver our opinions without constraint, I cannot in my conscience approve of these cabinet orders, which are neither consistent with the law, the constitution, nor the honour of the peers." The king replied, "In case my parliament should summon the peers, I forbid you to attend, and commission you to make my will known to the other princes of the blood." The duke answered, "Sire, the other princes of the blood are here; such a command will proceed more becomingly from your mouth than from mine." The king turned to the princes, and said, "You hear, messieurs?" "Yes, sire, we hear something which is very repugnant to the rights of the peers, and not very advantageous to the duke d'Aiguillon."

The parliaments of Bordeaux and Toulouse passed a judgment precisely of the same import with that of the parliament of Paris, against the inseparable companion and minister of the king, and the parliament of Rennes returned the king's letters-patent unopened. As a punishment for this act of insubordination, the king caused two deputies from the court, who had been sent to him to Paris, to be thrown into prison. The parliament of Metz also by a sentence which it pronounced gave rise to a formal campaign on the part of the uniforms against the robes of justice. Marshal d'Armentières marched against the peaceful parliament with eight companies of grenadiers, tore out the sentence from their records before their eyes, released the advocates who had been arrested by command of the parliament, and in his turn carried off

some of the councillors of parliament to places of banishment. The parliament of Rouen and the chief college of taxes ("the court of aids") did not suffer themselves to be terrified by these acts of violence from sending representations to the court, couched in strongest language. The parliament of Bordeaux was not deterred or turned aside from its course: it would not for a moment recognise the right, which the king's council assumed, of annulling a sentence which had been legally passed, and of laying down the principle, "that there is no other justice or law in the land except the will of the sovereign, and that the courts and officers of justice are a species of royal servants."

The government of France proceeded upon this principle with the parliaments in January, 1771, and with the parliament of Paris in particular. Everything was carried through by mere military power. The friends of darkness rejoiced; and there seemed to be no suspicion that such agitation was but the outward sign of a deep inward movement of the public will, growing and increasing with the progress of the age and oppression exercised by sovereign powers.[d]

FALL OF THE PARLIAMENTS (1771 A.D.)

The edict of December 7th, 1770, shook the very foundations of a magistracy that had existed for centuries. From one end to the other of France the reconstruction took place. Only one aim was kept in view, namely, to render the king's authority, and that of his ministers acting in his name, supreme and absolute over the fortunes of the nation. But Louis XV hesitated. Maupeou's enterprise appeared to him dangerous. However, subject to the persistent persuasions of his mistress, who in her turn was urged on by the duke d'Aiguillon, with whom Maupeou was carrying on a secret intrigue, he at last yielded and consented to shelter his own weakness behind the energy of the chancellor; but he reserved the right of disowning his part in the business should the latter fail, and of punishing his minister in a most signal manner for the disappointment that he, the king, would have to endure.

On the night of the 19th of January, 1771, two musketeers made their way, in the king's name, into the houses of the members of parliament. They ordered the members to resume their functions, and enjoined them to answer in writing, without comment or remark, a simple "yes" or "no." Confused by this fatal awakening, moved by the tears and terror of their families, thirty-eight magistrates wrote "yes": the rest held out. Soon even those who had consented, began to feel ashamed of what they had done; they felt that honour forbade them to forsake their colleagues, and they all retracted the consent which they had been surprised into giving.

The following night they were again awakened. The king's officer entered and informed them they had all been deprived of their offices by a decision of the council, which forbade them ever to perform their functions again or to sit as members of parliament. A few moments after, some musketeers arrived bringing warrants, exiling the recalcitrant members to different places, all distant both from the capital and from each other.[1] On the 23rd of January, the chancellor summoned a provisional parliament consisting of members of the council of state; a monstrous combination, because in cases of appeal to a higher tribunal the judgments pronounced by one part of the council which called itself the parliament would have to be revised by the other

[1 Before the end of the year over 700 members of various parliaments were in exile.]

part of the council. As early as the month of February, the provisional parliament recorded an edict creating higher courts (a kind of parliament) in the towns of Arras, Blois, Châlons-sur-Marne, Clermont, Lyons, and Poitiers.

The fall of the parliaments created a profound sensation, but produced no sign of rebellion. The proscribed members showed noble resignation and did not appeal to the interest or sympathy of the multitude. The people remained calm because they were indifferent. They blamed the parliament for not having defended the interests of the ratepayers with as much energy as it had shown in the defence of its own prerogatives. The parliament had, besides, powerful enemies in those who supported the Jesuits and the priests, while Voltaire, and the philosophers whose writings had been condemned by the parliament, openly rejoiced in its ruin. Philosophy in this case cared more for revenge than for the interests of liberty; this approbation was loudly testified, and the echo of these rejoicings penetrated to the people and was not without influence on public opinion.

But side by side with this indifference to the fate of parliament, there arose a deep feeling of indignation against those who were vilely flattering a courtesan, who openly professed a contempt for the laws, destroyed the constitution of the law courts, exiled people, confiscated their property, and built upon the ruins of liberty a most humiliating despotism. The agitation produced by this feeling was in proportion to the progress of ideas on liberty. Weak as yet among the lower classes, more pronounced in the middle classes, it had spread rapidly among the aristocracy.

Paris, said Baron Besenval,[h] which by its outcry had urged on the parliament to make a desperate resistance, rose against this act of authority (the edict of December 7th); it was quite a different thing when, a few days later, the parliament and the "court of aids" were formally dissolved. Then the excitement was universal; amongst women especially. According to them, the monarchy was being undermined; and they spoke of members of parliament as of victims who were being sacrificed on the altar of despotism.

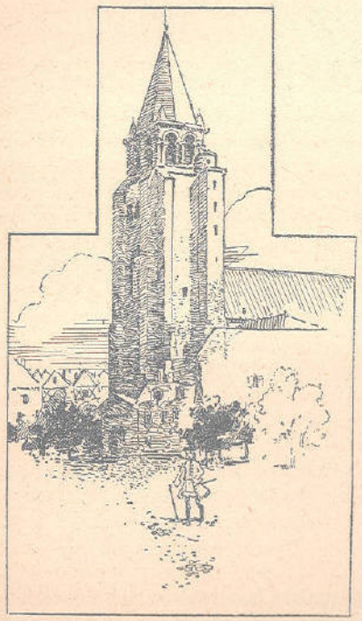
All the princes of the blood except the count de la Marche, son of the prince of Conti, made known to the parliamentary recorder that they protested against all the recent acts. The resistance of the bar was unanimous. Barristers refused to plead before the semblance of a court which had replaced the former judges, and attorneys would give no instructions for the undertaking of any proceedings.

The firmest as well as the most intelligent opposition came from the court of aids which was presided over by Lamoignon de Malesherbes. In the protest against the edict of December, 1770, and the state of the magistracy, a protest adopted by the court of aids on the 18th of February, the illustrious magistrate firmly declares what are the foundations of kingly authority and obedience of subjects:

"By what fatality, sire, are your most loyal subjects forced to remind their master of the obligations which providence laid upon him in giving him the crown? You only hold the crown from God, sire. You also owe your power to the voluntary submission of your subjects, and to that attachment to your royal blood which we have inherited from our ancestors. Deign to remember that the divine power is the source of all legitimate sovereignty, but that its whole aim and object is to insure the greatest happiness to humanity; that God only crowns kings in order to procure for his subjects security of life, personal liberty, and peaceful enjoyment of property.

[1771 A.D.]

"There exist in France, as in all monarchies, certain inviolable rights which belong to the nation. In spite of the machinations of those who are endeavouring to sow disaffection in your kingdom, they have not yet succeeded in persuading you that there is no difference between the French nation and a nation of slaves. The law of property is, of all human laws, the one which has heretofore been most respected in France. That a man cannot be deprived of his office is also a sacred law in this kingdom, for it is through that alone that any citizen can feel sure of his position. Therefore confiscation of property, and especially confiscation of office, have never been decreed except after a criminal inquiry. For the first time, sire, since the founding of the kingdom, we have just seen both property and offices confiscated after a mere allegation and by a decision of your council.



CHURCH OF ST. GERMAIN DES PRÉS, PARIS

"The nation used formerly to have the satisfaction of making known its grievances to the kings who preceded you; but for a century and a half the states have not been convened.[1] Until now the protests of the courts have, to a certain extent, made up for those of the states; but to-day the last resource which was left to the people has been taken from them. The people, now that their representatives are dispersed, have no longer any means of making themselves heard. The nobility, who are nearer to your majesty, are obliged to keep silent. Finally, even the princes of the blood seem to be denied access to the throne. Question the nation itself, sire, since the nation alone is permitted to be heard by your majesty. The incorruptible testimony of its representatives will show at least whether the magistracy alone is interested in the violation of the laws, or whether the cause we are defending to-day is that of the people, through whom and by whom you are king."

The king only admitted the delegates of the court of aids, charged with the complaints of that court, on the 4th of March following. He said to them, "I shall not receive the protests of the court of aids if such protests concern matters which do not come within its province, and still less, if before being presented to me, they have been allowed to gain publicity."

A solemn mass was to be celebrated on the 22nd of March in memory of the entry of Henry IV into Paris, and the different courts were summoned to attend. On the 20th the members of the court of aids decided that they would withdraw if the stalls set apart for the members of parliament were occupied by any except those who formerly belonged to that institution, and, finding these places occupied by members of the provisional parliament, the court actually retired. On their return to the palace, they renewed their protest, declaring they would acknowledge none of the acts of the new court,

[1] The last states-general had been convoked in 1614 under Louis XIII.

[1771 A.D.]

and forbidding all officers within their jurisdiction to yield obedience to it. Before many days had passed the president was banished to Malesherbes.

Royal commissioners appeared on the 9th of April before the court of aids which had been convoked by warrants, and recorded an edict suppressing that court and transferring its functions to the parliaments and the higher councils. This being done, Marshal Richelieu enjoined the magistrates to disperse. They remained seated and declared they would only yield to force.

The marshal called in the soldiers. Then the court retired, led by the king's officers. All the members afterwards met at the house of the president De Boisgibault, who was presiding in the absence of Malesherbes, and signed a protest against the edict suppressing the court. A warrant was issued banishing the president De Boisgibault.

The inadequacy of the provisional parliament soon made itself felt. The chancellor saw the necessity of making some definite organization which would inspire confidence, but where was he to find the constituents of a new parliament? The former members rejected every proposal that was made to them; they preferred honourable banishment, and not one of them was deterred by the prospect of losing the income arising from his office. The great council was then appealed to, being supposed to cherish an old grudge against the parliament in consequence of former disputes. Its adherence was obtained, except in the case of some members who were consequently banished. The great council formed the nucleus of the new court, where the number of judges was reduced to seventy. This was augmented by twelve ecclesiastics, several councillors of the court of aids, and some legal personages.

The king summoned these heterogeneous elements to Versailles on the 13th of April. Three edicts were read before this assembly and were recorded, although the council had no legal existence because it had not been formally installed. The first edict dissolved the Paris parliament, the second suppressed the court of aids, the third transformed the great council into a parliament.

Séguier, advocate-general, had the courage to utter before Louis XV and the judges who had superseded the former magistrates a speech representing the dissolution of parliament as a source of disturbance to men's minds and of confusion in the state. To this speech, the king, in closing the assembly, replied in the following words: "You have just heard my intentions, I wish them to be complied with. I command you to begin your duties on Monday. My chancellor shall install you. I forbid any protests against my wishes, and any representations in favour of my former parliament, for I shall never change." He pronounced these last words with an energy which was not habitual to him, and which created a profound impression.

The following day the attorney-general and the advocates-general sent in their resignations. Whilst these things were going on, the king was forming his ministry.

The countess du Barry wished the duke d'Aiguillon to be foreign minister, as another mortification for Choiseul. But it was necessary to wait till the sensation caused by the blow which had been struck at the parliament had somewhat calmed down. The duke d'Aiguillon was only declared minister in the month of June. The severity of his character supplemented the obstinacy and impetuosity of Maupeou. Severe measures became more and more frequent. Already the king, in letters written by himself, had forbidden any of the princes of the blood "to appear in his

presence, to see any member of the royal family, or to frequent any place where the court might be established." Anyone who opposed the chancellor's plans was either banished or imprisoned. If a parliament, by its decisions or by its representations, reflected in any way upon the new tribunals, it was immediately dissolved and replaced by judges chosen from among the sheriffs or seneschals. All the parliaments in the kingdom were thus successively destroyed and reconstructed during the year 1771.

This revolution of judicial order had taken place without any hindrance. Open opposition gradually diminished, as the new tribunals became consolidated and seemed to give promise of stability. At the end of some months, part of the bar reappeared in court. Many members of the former parliament, weary of exile, consented to a liquidation of their financial claims, thus seeming to acquiesce in the measure which struck a mortal blow at their whole order. The princes found their banishment from court a great hardship. By mutual agreement it was resolved to look upon their protest as not having taken place, and they reappeared at Versailles — first, the prince of Condé and the duke de Bourbon, later on the Orleans family. The prince of Conti alone remained true to his convictions.

Maupeou and Aiguillon were triumphant. Their work seemed to be prospering, their ascendency complete. Madame du Barry was a reigning power; the princes frequented her receptions, and many of the courtiers intrigued to gain the privilege of being admitted to the supper-parties at which she entertained the king. But this apparent calm concealed a deep wound. Maupeou had set a disastrous example of instability, and furnished a logical justification of future revolutions. People saw in his policy only an attempt to establish a weak despotism built up by an adventurer, assisted by a courtesan.

Montesquieu,[i] when discussing the different forms of government, had pointed out those which he considered most likely to conduce to the liberty and happiness of nations. In the midst of their declamations against religion, the philosophers also threw out suggestions of liberty, and soon men's imaginations began to follow them in their inquiries as to the right relations between sovereigns and their subjects, and the duties of people to the king. The attack directed by Maupeou against the inviolability of the magistracy, gave a considerable impetus to this disposition of men's minds. Already the expression "the sovereignty of the people" was being timidly uttered in this old nation which was trying to become young again. If no revolt took place in 1771 it was because the educated classes, amongst whom revolutions always originate, not knowing exactly what they desired, had not been able to incite the lower classes, who put their convictions into action almost before they are clearly defined. Around the king chaos was beginning to prevail. No sooner had the ministers overcome their enemies than they became divided against themselves, each one trying to grasp power at the expense of his colleagues. In society confusion reigned, because, while exceedingly tired of existing things, men knew not what means to adopt in order to change what they disliked.

The general dissatisfaction was shown in popular songs and jokes incessantly passing from mouth to mouth. The latest news of the disgraceful proceedings at court, and the vileness of certain magistrates were rapidly circulated and eagerly sought for by the irritated public. The police found it impossible to stop the sale of satirical writings. "The libel-mongers," says Lacretelle[j] "had acquired such power that the court sometimes compounded with them and bribed them to suppress their insulting statements

so that the whole of Europe might not ring with them." What can the police do against a crime in which everyone is an accomplice? They obtained obedience, but were laughed at all the same. The punishments appeared more ridiculous than terrible, people cared little for a few months' banishment provided it helped to bring about a better state of things. Some military men even were beginning to doubt the doctrine of passive obedience.

It did indeed vanish, but the monarchy fell into decay at the same time. The revolutionary tendency received a powerful impetus from the deep resentment aroused by Maupeou and Terray, who succeeded in alienating all parties. The first, not satisfied with having wrecked the magistracy, kept provinces where the states were held[1] in subjection to terrorism. Warrants were issued more frequently than ever from the office of the duke de la Vrillière. The marchioness of Langéac, his mistress, used to sell them, and never refused one to any powerful man who had a grievance to avenge or a passion to gratify.[k]

An Infantryman, End of the Eighteenth Century

The comte de Ségur tells an anecdote whose humour renders it all the more horrible, as an instance of the corrupt ministry under the duke de la Vrillière: One day the chevalier de Coigny met a young flower girl remarkable for her beauty, called Jeanneton. She looked remarkably happy and on his asking why, said, "I am joyful because I have been to the count de Sainte-Florentin, and Madame . . . persuaded him to give me for ten louis a warrant of arrest against my husband, who is a brute, and is cruel to me."

Two years after the count met the same Jeanneton, but now pale, thin, and hollow-eyed. "Why, Jeanneton, what has become of you, my poor girl; I never see you?" "Alas, sir, I was very silly to rejoice. My husband had the same idea as myself. He went to the same minister and by the same means got me sent to prison, so that twenty louis were spent by our poor family to get both of us shut up."[l]

THE LAST DAYS OF LOUIS XV (1774 A.D.)

Meanwhile, his old fear of hell had grown upon the king with increased force; and this it was that suggested to Du Barry the fantastic idea of playing the rôle of De Maintenon. While the first dignitaries of the church prostituted the Roman purple at the feet of a courtesan, a simple priest had

[1 These were the *pays d'état*, of which there were seventeen in 1789, such as Brittany, Burgundy, Provence, Languedoc, etc. These were the most recent acquisitions of the crown, and had retained certain of the old liberties.]

dared to raise a protesting voice. The abbé De Beauvais, preaching the sermon on Holy Thursday, 1773, before the king and his favourite, stupefied the court with this allusion: "Solomon, fallen anew into debauchery, worn out in the attempt to spur his jaded senses by all the pleasures surrounding the throne, ended by seeking fresh diversions among the vile dregs of public corruption!"

He awaited at least disgrace, if not even the Bastille; he received a bishopric. Louis rewarded the rude warning, but he failed to profit by it. The Du Barry, terrified, plunged him deeper still into the mud; the favourite called to her aid all the infamies of the Parc-aux-Cerfs.[1] Seeking therein a pillar of support, she found instead her own ruin and Louis' death. The latter, an old man reeking with corruption, was at last struck down by his own vices, and his last victim dragged him to the tomb. A girl hardly more than a child, daughter of a miller in the environs of Trianon, by force of promises and threats had been delivered up to Louis by the royal police. Carrying in her system the germs of smallpox, of which she herself soon after died, she infected the king. On April 29th, 1774, the disease broke out, complicated by other evils smouldering in his vitiated blood.[2]

Du Barry and her creatures held their own for some days against those who preached penitence and the sacraments; when, the situation growing desperate, Louis sent the favourite to the duke d'Aiguillon at Ruel. The day following he declared that, though responsible for his conduct to God alone, he regretted having been the cause of scandal to his subjects. Dying despotism still stammered its formulas, interrupted by the death-rattle.

As on the famous journey of Metz, in 1744, Versailles, Paris—all France awaited anxiously day by day, hour by hour, news of the health of that prince known in those other days as Louis the Well-beloved; but this time one dread alone was manifested—that he would recover. When it was known that he had at last expired, the 10th of May, at two in the afternoon, a heavy weight was lifted from the heart of France.[3] The putrefied remains, which tainted the air, were removed in haste and without pomp to St. Denis, amid the sarcasms of the crowd which lined the way.*n*

Carlyle on the Last Hours of Louis XV

Louis would not suffer Death to be spoken of; avoided the sight of churchyards, funeral monuments, and whatsoever would bring it to mind. It is the resource of the Ostrich. Or sometimes, with a spasmodic antagonism, significant of the same thing, and of more, he would go; or stopping his court carriages would send into churchyards, and ask "how many new graves there were to-day," though it gave his poor Pompadour the disagreeablest qualms. We can figure the thought of Louis that day, when, all royally caparisoned for hunting, he met, at some sudden turning in the Wood of Senart, a ragged Peasant with a coffin: "For whom?"—It was for a poor brother slave, whom Majesty had sometimes noticed slaving in those quarters: "What did he die of?"—"Of hunger": the King gave his steed the spur.

[1] We speak figuratively; since the actual Parc-aux-Cerfs, the house on the rue St. Méderic had been sold by the king in 1771.

[2] His three daughters, who had never had the disease, presented a beautiful example of filial devotion: they cared for him devotedly during the course of the illness.

[3] The *Mémoires* de Bachaumont[m] cite a significant speech of the abbé Ste. de Geneviève. Some young philosophers were joking over the inefficacy of the saint's intervention in the malady of the late king. "Of what do you complain," interjected the abbé; "is he not dead?"

But figure his thought, when Death is now clutching at his own heart-strings; unlooked for, inexorable! Yes, poor Louis, Death has found thee. No palace walls or life-guards, gorgeous tapestries or gilt buckram of stiffest ceremonial could keep him out; but he is here, here at thy very life-breath, and will extinguish it. Thou, whose whole existence hitherto was a chimera and scenic show, at length becomest a reality: sumptuous Versailles bursts asunder, like a Dream, into void Immensity; Time is done and all the scaffolding of Time falls wrecked with hideous clangour round thy soul: the pale Kingdoms yawn open; there must thou enter, naked, all unkinged, and await what is appointed for Thee! Unhappy man, there as thou turnest, in dull agony, on thy bed of weariness, what a thought is thine! Purgatory and Hell-fire, now all too possible, in the prospect: in the retrospect,—alas, what thing didst thou do that were not better undone; what mortal didst thou generously help; what sorrow hadst thou mercy on? Do the "five hundred thousand" ghosts, who sank shamefully on so many battle-fields from Rossbach to Quebec, that thy Harlot might take revenge for an epigram,—crowd round thee in this hour? Thy foul Harem; the curses of mothers, the tears and infamy of daughters? Miserable man! thou "hast done evil as thou couldst": thy whole existence seems one hideous abortion and mistake of Nature; the use and meaning of thee not yet known. Wert thou a fabulous Griffin, devouring the works of men; daily dragging virgins to thy cave; clad also in scales that no spear would pierce: no spear but Death's? A Griffin not fabulous but real! Frightful, O Louis, seem these moments for thee.

A French Soldier, Time of Louis XV

And yet let no meanest man lay flattering unction to his soul. Louis was a Ruler; but art thou not also one? His wide France, look at it from the Fixed Stars (themselves not yet Infinitude), is no wider than thy narrow brick-field, where thou too didst faithfully, or didst unfaithfully. Man, "Symbol of Eternity imprisoned into Time!" it is not thy works, which are all mortal, infinitely little, and the greatest no greater than the least, but only the Spirit thou workest in, that can have worth or continuance.

But reflect, in any case, what a life-problem this of poor Louis, when he rose as *Bien-Aimé* from that Metz sick-bed, really was! What son of Adam swayed such incoherences into coherence? Could he? Blindest Fortune alone has cast him on the top of it: he swims there; can as little sway it as the drift-log sways the wind-tossed, moon-stirred Atlantic. "What have I done to be so loved?" he said then. He may say now: What have I done to be so hated? Thou hast done nothing, poor Louis! Thy fault is properly

even this, that thou didst nothing. What could poor Louis do? Abdicate, and wash his hands of it, in favour of the first that would accept? Other clear wisdom there was none for him. As it was, he stood gazing dubiously, the absurdest mortal extant (a very Solecism Incarnate) into the absurdest confused world; wherein at last nothing seemed so certain as this, That he, the incarnate Solecism, had five senses that were Flying Tables (Tables Volantes, which vanish through the floor, to come back reloaded), and a Parc-aux-Cerfs.

He who would understand to what a pass Catholicism, and much else, had now got; and how the symbols of the Holiest have become gambling-dice of the Basest, must read the narrative of those things by Besenval,[h] and Soulavie,[o] and the other Court Newsmen of the time. He will see the Versailles Galaxy all scattered asunder, grouped into new ever-shifting Constellations. There are nods and sagacious glances; go-betweens, silk dowagers mysteriously gliding, with smiles for this constellation, sighs for that: there is tremor, of hope or desperation, in several hearts. There is the pale grinning Shadow of Death, ceremoniously ushered along by another grinning Shadow, of Etiquette: at intervals the growl of Chapel Organs, like prayer by machinery; proclaiming, as a kind of horrid diabolic horse-laughter, "Vanity of vanities, all is Vanity!" Poor Louis! With these it is a hollow phantasmagory, where like mimes they mope and mowl, and utter false sounds for hire; but with thee it is frightful earnest.

Doomed mortal;—for is it not a doom to be Solecism incarnate! A new *Roi Fainéant*, King Donothing; but with the strangest new Mayor of the Palace: no bow-legged Pepin now for Mayor, but that same Cloudcapt, fire-breathing Spectre of Democracy; incalculable, which is enveloping the world! Was Louis, then, no wickeder than this or the other private Donothing and Eatall; such as we often enough see, under the name of Man of Pleasure, cumbering God's diligent Creation, for a time? Say, wretcheder! His Life-solecism was seen and felt of a whole scandalised world; him endless Oblivion cannot engulf, and swallow to endless depths,—not yet for a generation or two.

However, be this as it will, we remark, not without interest, that "on the evening of the 4th," Dame du Barry issues from the sick-room, with perceptible "trouble in her visage." It is the fourth evening of May, year of Grace 1774. Such a whispering in the Œil-de-Bœuf! Is he dying, then? What can be said, is that Du Barry seems making up her packages; she sails weeping through her gilt boudoirs, as if taking leave. Aiguillon and Company are near their last card; nevertheless they will not yet throw up the game. But as for the sacramental controversy, it is as good as settled without being mentioned; Louis sends for his Abbé Moudon in the course of next night; is confessed by him, some say for the space of "seventeen minutes," and demands the sacraments of his own accord.

Nay already, in the afternoon, behold is not this your Sorceress du Barry with the handkerchief at her eyes, mounting Aiguillon's chariot; rolling off in his Duchess's consolatory arms? She is gone: and her place knows her no more. Vanish, false Sorceress; into Space! Needless to hover at neighbouring Ruel; for thy day is done. Shut are the royal palace-gates for evermore; hardly in coming years shalt thou, under cloud of night, descend once, in black domino, like a black night-bird, and disturb the fair Antoinette's music-party in the park; all Birds of Paradise flying from thee, and musical windpipes growing mute. Thou unclean, yet unmalignant, not unpitiable thing! What a course was thine: from that first trucklebed

(in Joan of Arc's country) where thy mother bore thee, with tears, to an unnamed father: forward, through lowest subterranean depths, and over highest sunlit heights, of Harlotdom and Rascaldom to the guillotine-axe, which sheers away thy vainly whimpering head! Rest there uncursed; only buried and abolished; what else befitted thee?

Louis, meanwhile, is in considerable impatience for his sacraments; sends more than once to the window, to see whether they are not coming. Be of comfort, Louis, what comfort thou canst: they are under way, these sacraments. Towards six in the morning, they arrive. Cardinal Grand-Almoner Roche-Aymon is here in pontificals, with his pyxes and his tools: he approaches the royal pillow; elevates his wafer; mutters or seems to mutter somewhat;—and so (as the Abbé Georgel, in words that stick to one, expresses it) has Louis "made the *amende honourable* to God"; so does your Jesuit construe it.—"*Wa, Wa*," as the wild Clotaire groaned out, when life was departing, "what great God is this that pulls down the strength of the strongest kings!"

The *amende honourable*, what "legal apology" you will, to God: but not, if Aiguillon can help it, to man. Du Barry still hovers in his mansion at Ruel and while there is life, there is hope. Grand-Almoner Roche-Aymon, accordingly (for he seems to be in the secret), has no sooner seen his pyxes and gear repacked than he is stepping majestically forth again, as if the work were done! But King's Confessor Abbé Moudon starts forward; with anxious acidulent face, twitches him by the sleeve; whispers in his ear. Whereupon the poor Cardinal has to turn round, and declare audibly, "that his Majesty repents of any subjects of scandal he may have given (*a pu donner*); and purposes, by the strength of Heaven assisting him, to avoid the like—for the future!" Words listened to by Richelieu with mastiff-face, growing blacker; and answered to, aloud, "with an epithet,"—which Besenval will not repeat. Old Richelieu, conqueror of Minorca, companion of Flying-Table orgies, perforator of bedroom walls, is thy day also done?

So it has lasted for the better of half a fortnight; the Du Barry gone almost a week. Besenval[h] says, all the world was getting impatient *que cela finît;* that poor Louis would have done with it. It is now the 10th of May, 1774. He will soon have done now. This tenth May day falls into the loathsome sick-bed; but dull, unnoticed there: for they that look out of the windows are quite darkened; the cistern-wheel moves discordant on its axis; Life, like a spent steed, is panting towards the goal. In their remote apartments, Dauphin and Dauphiness stand road-ready; all grooms and equerries booted and spurred: waiting for some signal to escape the house of pestilence.

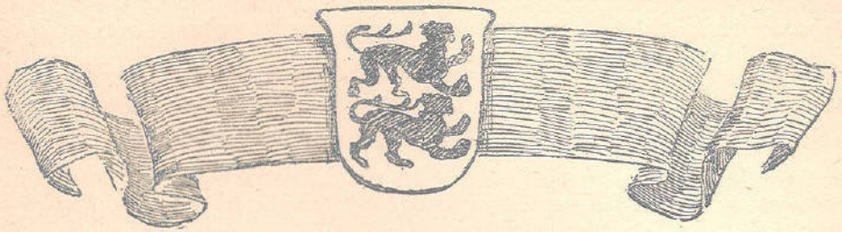
And hark! across the Œil-de-Bœuf, what sound is that; sound "terrible and absolutely like thunder?" It is the rush of the whole Court, rushing as in wager, to salute the new Sovereigns: Hail to your Majesties! The Dauphin and Dauphiness are King and Queen! Overpowered with many emotions, they two fall on their knees together, and, with streaming tears, exclaim: "O God, guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign!"—Too young indeed.

But thus, in any case, "with a sound absolutely like thunder," has the Horologe of Time struck, and an old Era passed away. The Louis that was, lies forsaken, a mass of abhorred clay; abandoned "to some poor persons, and priests of the Chapelle Ardente,"—who make haste to put him "in two lead coffins, pouring in abundant spirits of wine." The new Louis with his Court is rolling towards Choisy, through the summer afternoon: the royal tears still flow; but a word mispronounced by Monseigneur d'Artois sets

them all laughing, and they weep no more. Light Mortals, how ye walk your light life-minuet, over bottomless abysses, divided from you by a film.

For the rest, the proper authorities felt that no Funeral could be too unceremonious. Besenval himself thinks it was unceremonious enough. Carriages containing two noblemen of the usher species, and a Versailles clerical person; some score of mounted pages, some fifty palfreniers: these, with torches, but not so much as in black, start from Versailles on the second evening, with their leaden bier. At a high trot, they start; and keep up that pace. For the jibes (*brocards*) of those Parisians, who stand planted in two rows, all the way to St. Denis, and "give vent to their pleasantry, the characteristic of the nation," do not tempt one to slacken. Towards midnight the vaults of St. Denis receive their own: unwept by any eye of all these; if not by poor Loque his neglected Daughter's, whose Nunnery is hard by.

Him they crush down, and huddle under-ground, in this impatient way; him and his era of sin and tyranny and shame: for behold a New Era is come; the future all the brighter that the past was base.[p]



CHAPTER IV

THE AGE OF VOLTAIRE

[1717–1789 A.D.]

The real age of Louis XIV included but twenty-five or thirty years, the age of Voltaire extends from his first imprisonment to the French Revolution. Voltaire dominated his epoch longer and more efficaciously than did Louis XIV. He held it by the head and by the heart. He was the point of departure or the centre of the whole intellectual movement; he shook up all ideas; in every kind of literary work he has given us works of prime importance; for more than sixty years his voice did not cease to make itself heard. The fact that his adversaries are chiefly known to us as "Voltaire's enemies" proves his kingship. He was in his time "the king Voltaire." — RAMBAUD.[b]

In the eighteenth century, with Louis XV, royalty renounced its self-assumed direction over matters of the mind. It did nothing for letters: it continued to do almost nothing for science, while the superintendence of the fine arts, intrusted in 1751 to Poisson, marquis de Marigny and brother of Madame de Pompadour, encouraged but an inferior art. French royalty allowed foreign sovereigns to usurp the protector's rôle which formerly Louis XIV exercised in their dominions.

In reality, however, men of letters had no longer any need of the throne's protection. In the sixteenth century they depended on the nobles, in the seventeenth on the king; now, in the eighteenth, they looked for support to the public.

Louis XV was too much the slave of a complex etiquette to mix with his subjects; moreover he had no taste for men of letters, and above all he feared them. When it came to a matter of protection he had to protect himself against them. To please their new masters, the public, they attacked the ancient system of government on all sides. All was changed in the relations of king and men of letters. The true king of the latter was no longer at Versailles; he was at Ferney.[b]

VOLTAIRE

Three men were at the head of the movement; Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. The first, whose real name was Arouet, was born in Paris in 1694, his father being a former notary and native of Poitou. He saw only the unhappy years of the great king, and was one of the most ardent leaders

in the reaction which burst forth against the religious customs of the preceding reign. At twenty-one years of age, thrown into the Bastille on account of a satire against Louis XIV which he had not written, he was already paying the price of his reputation for wit and malice. Having opened his career with his tragedy of *Œdipe*, full of threatening verses (1718) and the *Henriade*, an apology for religious toleration (1723), he immediately achieved renown, and was everywhere sought after. He was, however, one day to feel the disadvantage of the highly aristocratic society into the midst of which he had been introduced from his earliest youth and which suited his brilliant and buoyant wit, his fine and delicate temperament. A chevalier de Rohan-Chabot, having spoken insolently to him, was quickly punished for it by one of those stinging replies which Voltaire knew so well how to deliver. The cowardly and brutal grand seigneur revenged himself by the hands of his lackeys. Voltaire, having no lackeys, demanded satisfaction. The gentleman, by a second act of cowardice, persuaded the minister to lock up this impudent plebeian, who dared call himself grand seigneur, in the Bastille. Being released soon afterwards, but on condition of leaving the country, Voltaire went to England "to learn and to think." He remained there three years engaged in the study of Locke, Newton, and Shakespeare with a mind more eager for liberty of thought and speech than for political liberty. On his return his dramas, *Brutus* and *La Mort de César*, placed on the French stage a reflection of the great English tragedian and his *Lettres anglaises* made popular the ideas of the wise philosopher and the great astronomer. This was not accomplished without persecution. The latter work was burned at the hands of the executioner.

DIDEROT

Voltaire, who owed to Christian sentiment two of his most beautiful poetical works, *Zaïre* and *Tancrède*, attacked the church without ceasing, and his strongest as well as his most constant efforts were directed against that spiritual power which hampered thought, even more than against the civil authority which only hindered action. To prosecute this war he allied himself to sovereigns and worked under their protection. He was in correspondence with the great Catherine of Russia and many German princes. He sojourned at the court of Frederick II, that sceptic and learned prince whose French verses he corrected. This relation with foreign monarchs rendered him insensible to the reverses of France. His native land seemed to him to be where liberty of thought reigned, and thus he forgot his true fatherland. He finally established himself at the extremity of France on the very frontier in order to be able at the first indication of peril to cross over to Ferney near Geneva. From there issued light verses, letters, tragedies, novels, works of history, science, and philosophy, carried as it were by the winds, and making the tour of Europe in a few days.

For good or evil, Voltaire represented the society of his time. He was indifferent to the disordered state of morals, and if hidden under a brilliant

outside, he was ready to esteem it as an added elegance. But in aging with the century he took, like it, to more serious thoughts. The social evil became his personal enemy, and love of justice his strongest passion. He rescued and defended the victims of deplorable judicial errors; he denounced unceasingly the numerous faults of legislation, of jurisprudence and public administration; and all the reforms in the civil order which he solicited have been accomplished after his time. He had, in a certain way, the intellectual government of Europe for fifty years, and justly merited the hatred of those who were blind enough to imagine that the world could remain stationary, and the admiration of those who regarded society as under an obligation to work without ceasing for its material and moral amelioration. Cardinal de Bernis, in 1775, called him "the great man of the century," and with reason.[c]

ROUSSEAU (1712–1778 A.D.)

Jean Jacques Rousseau exercised an influence of another sort. Voltaire spoke with the accents of a sovereign; Rousseau wrote as one of the people, son of the working classes,[1] one who had known poverty, almost misery, and lived for a long time as an adventurer. His genius was revealed in two strange works in which he appeared to take sides against society and civilisation. The success of an opera opened to him the doors of society in Paris, then those of the court; but in this new atmosphere he felt awkward and ill at ease. He had to struggle against his past and the false position he had made for himself. Naturally restless, carried away by an exalted sensibility and an active imagination, he was unable to adapt himself to the arbitrary conventionalities of the court society into which he had not been born and which was never congenial to philosophers and men of letters who desired to impose upon it their yoke. He sought a retreat at l'Ermitage, near Montmorency, then in Switzerland, afterwards in England, nowhere finding peace, carrying always with him his pride, his sensibility, his diffidence, disdain, jealousy, and rancour.

In his life we find the key to his works. He declared war against the inequalities of society which caused him so much suffering, a suffering which never ceased. He attacked not only the vices of society, but its errors, its ridicule; and he did this without restraint, at the risk of shaking its principal institution. He followed no rule or law save his own feelings. Virtue and duty for him lay in the promptings of the soul and of passion. He strove for simplicity and truth, and fell constantly into exaggeration and error. He held himself entirely outside of the church and the government. He accepted nothing as it existed; he made for himself an individual religion and virtually lived in an ideal society of his own creation. He searched, he changed; he possessed great and generous aspirations tinged with melancholy. As has been said of him, he was a savage, morose and speculative. But appealing to the sentiments, he moved the soul. He was the most vigorous and original polemist of his century — Villemain[f] says, the orator of his century. Not having, like Voltaire, a rôle to play, powers to save, and interests to defend, he held a straight course; he listened only to his own convictions, although these convictions varied and based themselves frequently on superficial principles. He was carried along by passion and brought his style to the point of declamation, often an exaggerated declamation.

His success was in part due to the fact that, in an age of evil politics, of remissness in customs, and a lowering in the standard of character, he stirred

[1 He was the son of a clock-maker of Geneva.]

the souls of the people. He communicated to France something of his own restlessness. He agitated her and put passion into her. Encouraged and astonished by his first success, he pursued his course but modified it. From a misanthropical critic he became unconsciously a reformer. He took up the cause of spiritualism against Diderot or D'Holbach who attacked it, or against Voltaire and others who defended it badly; and as it was his nature never to be satisfied, he established philosophy in religion. He declared war against spectacles and the theatre. In *Émile*, published in 1762, he undertook to remodel mankind by education. He preached the family spirit and love of humanity, noble sentiments which had been too much forgotten by the court circles of the eighteenth century. It had been customary in great families to keep children at a distance; from that time it became the mode to recall them.

Had Rousseau been satisfied with his first discourses, the impression of them would have soon been effaced. *Émile* assured his popularity. It was a plea often false, but always ardent, warm, favouring generous ideas. It was a book little calculated to inspire confidence even in those prepossessed in its favour, but a book full of seduction. It allured by the easiness of the virtues that it preached, a religion without cult, a morality without practice or obligations, a well-doing, a love of humanity, all the more vague in that the objects treated were so widely extended. Rousseau exalted the sensibilities and reconciled more or less all the moral ideas to the sentiments. Having variety in himself he gave variety to his readers. By the romance of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, he won the women and children, painting the picture of the passions in colours a little less vivid than those used for the romances and comedies then in vogue. Even his faults, the romantic fashion in which he painted the movements of the soul, his manner of dogmatising, but added to his success.

Le Contrat Social, published also in 1762, was Rousseau's greatest work, and undoubtedly the greatest work of the eighteenth century, after *L'Esprit des lois*. Rousseau, without stepping out of the field of pure speculation, searched for the origin of sovereignty and placed it in the people, prior to the formation of society. He taught that society was the work of the sovereign people, established in virtue of a contract of which he discussed the clauses. He undertook to determine the rights of man and those of the citizen, the rights of the individual and those of the state. He debated the conditions of power and proclaimed that the nations always possessed the power of changing their government.

Rousseau is far from having the justness of mind necessary to solve finally the difficult problems that he attacks. He too often tends to exaggerate the rights of the state at the expense of the individual, and to sacrifice the liberty of the individual. Despite certain restrictions, he pushes the sovereignty of the people to the point of tyranny. His ideas are frequently obscure and contradictory.

But *Le Contrat Social* was, for the men of the eighteenth century, a revelation. Rousseau brought to the light of day a crowd of questions, forgotten or relegated to the dust of the schools. He brought them up for discussion in the presence of an incorrigible government, of which the better minds commenced to despair. He took again all the political doctrines for a basis as Descartes had taken the philosophical beliefs, commencing by doubting in order to reach a new conclusion. He engaged in controversies of a new order. He undertook to find the rational legitimacy of the different powers, while before the search had been only for their historical legitimacy.

His influence on the last generation of the eighteenth century was enormous. The misfortune was that he was nearly alone in the education of this generation, and that his opponents, like his disciples, swept along by him on to the ground of theory and abstraction, carried to the debates of the Revolution more absolute ideas than practical judgment.[d]

MONTESQUIEU (1689–1755 A.D.)

The baron De Montesquieu, a calmer and more serious mind than Voltaire, although he had written the *Lettres persanes*, a profound and redoubtable mockery, while seeming trivial, took twenty years to compose one single book, *L'Esprit des lois*, but it was an immortal monument he was raising. "Mankind having lost its rights," says Voltaire, "M. de Montesquieu has come to find them again." Montesquieu seeks and gives reasons for civil laws and political laws; he exposes the nature of governments; and if he condemns no one, if his changes cause little inquietude, his preferences are nevertheless very clear; it is English liberty which he offers to the admiration of France. When he visited Great Britain in 1729, he wrote *à Londres liberté et égalité*, and sixty years before 1789, he pronounced the motto of the Revolution.[c]

CHARLES DE SECONDAT, BARON DE MONTESQUIEU (1689–1755)

Well known as Montesquieu was, yet, *L'Esprit des lois*, a work conceived and worked over for a long time in the silence of the château of Labrède, was when published in 1749 a revelation. His contemporaries found it to be a complete treatise on the origin of society, the rights of the people, civil law, political law, the basis and condition of government. Montesquieu, with his spirit of analysis and originality, raised a crowd of new questions, the greater number of which he only touched on: many he answered, and on the subjects of monarchy, despotism, aristocracy, the republic, he offered theories which though artificial were at least striking.

The first to give to France the theory of mixed government, he distinguished the different powers, executive, legislative, judiciary, and showed the necessity of separating them in theory and in action, better than had been done in any government of his day. His type is a legislature divided into two bodies and a monarchy invested with the right of veto and with responsible ministers. He revealed the principles of the representative system, and determined the true conditions of the representation not called to govern but to make laws and see to their execution — "a thing," added he, "that could be done so well, and that there does not exist even the wish to do well."

Trying to explain the history of Europe from feudal times and the first constitutions of the Middle Ages, Montesquieu proves that there was a tendency towards the formation of mixed governments, although the government was checked by the preponderance of royalty in France. Voltaire, dominated by his admiration for masterpieces and greatness, had glorified Louis XIV; the thinkers and original spirits of the time, intent on the future, like Montesquieu and D'Argenson,[1] evinced an instinctive repulsion for this exaggerated admiration and were led into other paths of thought.

L'Esprit des lois made people think: such was the intention of Montesquieu, for one of the characteristics of his genius was to be purely speculative. The most lively polemics sprang up as if at a given signal. Moreover the theory of mixed governments, one of the most important parts of the work, was also the part least comprehended and least pleasing to the general taste. It seemed too complicated to minds as yet but little exercised, and who imagined that the simplicity of the machinery was the first condition of good government.[d]

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGE

The eighteenth century may admit of division, though much less definitely than the seventeenth. We may distinguish two periods. Montesquieu died in 1755, and in the same year Rousseau published his first manifest. Montesquieu and Voltaire for the first period, Voltaire and Rousseau for the second — these are the leaders of new generations.

In the first of these two periods, criticism still respects the principle of royalty — what it concerns itself with is the reform of abuses. Montesquieu and the Voltaire of this period are monarchists at heart — the former would content himself with a temperate monarchy; the latter would admit an enlightened despotism. Voltaire was a gentleman of the bedchamber and historiographer of France (1745); he dedicated *Le Temple de la Gloire* to Louis XV; he occupied a post of chamberlain at Frederick II's court. In his *Siècle de Louis XIV* he was still under the spell of a glorious absolutism. But after 1751 Voltaire, although he corresponded with sovereigns, no longer sought their society; he had installed himself in his château at Ferney and wanted to be a king himself. Diderot, although he let himself be drawn to Catherine II's court, ended by confusing in the same attack both royalty and its abuses. Rousseau appeared and in his *Contrat Social* (1762) declared war upon monarchies.

The first period with Voltaire is a purely classic one in literature. Rousseau stamped the second by a somewhat different language and literary form; he is the point of departure of the future romantic movement. In the first period the English influence shows itself in political ideas and in science; in the second, with Voltaire and Ducis, it spreads itself over a master branch of French literature, the theatre.

In the first period nature was ignored as completely as in the time of Louis XIV; but Rousseau discovered it, revealed it, and with him a whole generation passionately sought after it. It was after 1762 that the French people opened their eyes to the beauties of the French landscape, and realised all that had been artificial hitherto in their literature, their painting, and their manner of life. The revelation was completed when Bernardin de St. Pierre initiated them into the marvels of tropical nature.

[1 The marquis d'Argenson (1694–1757). Author of *Considérations sur le gouvernement de la France.*]

PHILOSOPHIC AND ECONOMIC TENDENCIES

The eighteenth century created no original philosophy. The high metaphysical speculations of Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Leibnitz do not belong to that age. The search after truths which the human intellect did not seem to it sufficiently organised to attain would have retarded it too much in its essentially practical work. What the century proposed to itself to do was to effect the destruction of traditional abuses and the formation of a society founded upon reason.

In England Locke had rejected innate ideas — in doing this he destroyed the bridge which Descartes had tried to throw across the abyss in order to pass from the existence of the *ego* to the existence of God. All our ideas, according to Locke, have their origin in experience; our senses introduce images of the external world into our intellect, and reflection transforms them into ideas. Cartesian metaphysics was thus ruined to its very foundation.

Almost all the French philosophers from Voltaire to Condorcet belonged to Locke's school; and with the suppression of innate ideas an entire group of philosophers had concluded in the non-existence of God, of whom these ideas, according to Descartes' doctrine, would be a reflection on our intellect. Helvétius, in his work *De l'Esprit* (1758), and D'Holbach, in a series of publications of which the chief is *Le Système de la Nature* (1770), professed atheism. Diderot himself, with frequent relapses into deism, inclined to this school. It is believed, however, that the sense of several passages in his work has been altered by his friend Naigeon, who edited his writings in 1798 and impregnated them with his own atheism.

Voltaire and Rousseau were believers in the immortality of the soul and in the existence of God. Voltaire rejected revealed religion; he affected to place paganism, Judaism, Islamism, Buddhism, and Christianity on the same footing. Nevertheless he admitted a Supreme Being outside of these various creeds. When Jupiter, Jehovah, Allah, or Brahma have been dethroned, there remains natural religion, whose dogmas and moral philosophy were founded on reason. Voltaire, like Rousseau, was especially a deist.

These ideas, often uncertain in Voltaire's mind and sparsely scattered in his works, Rousseau gathered together and expressed with convincing eloquence in his *Émile* and especially in his *Profession de foi du vicaire Savoyard.* This vicar is a priest who doubts the ancient dogmas but to whom the splendour of nature's spectacle reveals the Author of all things at the same time with the duties he has prescribed for human beings.

Two philosophic tendencies of the coming revolution are already active. Robespierre was inspired by Rousseau when he inaugurated the deistic cult of the Supreme Being; and the Hébertists proceeded from D'Holbach when they attempted to make atheism prevail.[b]

The philosophers attacked everything, the economists touched upon material interests only. In the seventeenth century a nation was considered rich according to the scale in which it bought little and sold much. Quesnay demonstrated that precious metals are the signs of wealth, not wealth itself, and thought it was found in agriculture. Gournay was all for industries. The theory of the Scotchman, Adam Smith, who lived a long time in France, was more general; for him wealth was in labour, and labour had three modes of application: agriculture, industry, and commerce; his disciples recognised a fourth — intellectual labour, that is to say, arts, letters, and sciences.

From the school of Quesnay came the celebrated axiom: "*Laissez faire, laissez passer,*" which was applicable for the moment, when the edicts of

1754 and 1764 recognised the liberty of commerce in grain, which Turgot proclaimed anew. The marquis of Argenson had said the same thing under another form — "*Pas trop gouverner.*" [c]

Thus the philosophers were allowed to undertake the political education of the nation at their pleasure. Opinions were permitted to be formed in several Paris salons, entirely unsympathetic to the court, where brilliant women gathered the philosophers about them and assumed the patronage of the new ideas. From the salons of Mesdames Geoffrin and Du Deffand, or of Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, these ideas spread into the cafés, the theatres, and other public places, where the society was much more mixed than before. For the old-time distinctions were gradually being effaced; nobles and bourgeois, brought up almost in the same manner, lived and above all thought alike. They had a fund of common ideas, and it might be said that France was the country in which men had become the most alike, one to the other.[d]

The chief evidences of this great change in public opinion are to be observed in popular customs. Side by side with the indications we have already mentioned are other symptoms, less important perhaps, but which history cannot afford to ignore. Thus dress begins to assume a character less sumptuous and artificial in consequence both of imitation of the English and of modifications spontaneously brought about. Plain stuffs and sober colours reappear among men, and the women again display that elegant simplicity brought into such prominence by the heroines of Rousseau. Panniers and vast coiffures would long since have disappeared had not court etiquette maintained them against all spirit of innovation. As it is, women are soon to allow their hair more freedom of arrangement and to restore it to its natural colour. In small things as in great a return to nature is invoked.

THE FINE ARTS

Most marked of all the signs of moral evolution are those observable in the arts. Tragedies gave voice to feelings of patriotism and French nationality which were applauded by Rousseau despite the monarchical form in which they were still presented; but it is in another department of dramatic art that the new tendencies find their fullest expression. The *opéra-comique*, that product of a musical school so peculiarly French, reached a high point of development between 1760 and 1780. In these prose dramas mingled with song, which in part realise the ideals of Diderot, are belied Rousseau's theories of French incapacity for musical achievement, though their source of inspiration is Rousseau himself, somewhat modified and softened.

Sedaine and other writers co-operate successfully with musicians such as the graceful Dalayrac and Monsigny, who composes by instinct, according to his illustrious contemporary, Grétry. The simple and rapid melodies of this latter composer, bubbling over as they are with eternal youth, still delight us by their contrast with the colossal works of modern times that fairly succumb under the weight of their own science and the enormous amount of machinery they require. The essential characteristics of Grétry and his school are extreme naturalness combined with a charming vivacity that is devoid of subtlety or exaggeration, and tender, penetrating passion. All traces of social corruption have disappeared; in this rejuvenated form of musical art there is to be perceived the freshness of a breath of spring.

The young French school was made complete by a German who sounded the heavier chords of the lyre and made the form of grand opera particularly

his own. Gluck had suffered long from the insignificance of the Italian background, and his dramatic genius was never truly revealed until he found themes worthy of his inspiration and a librettist capable of giving them form. "It has been my aim," he writes, "to reduce music to its true function, that of seconding poetry by giving additional force to sentiments and situations without obstructing the action or allowing the interest to cool by the introduction of superfluous ornament." Having first made a name in Italy, which recognised his greatness while rejecting his principles of art, he came to Paris, where he took up permanent residence, making the French tongue his own. France received with enthusiasm this glorious adopted son, but Italy, again on the offensive, challenged Gluck's success in France and inaugurated that war between the Gluckists and the Piccinnists, or between the French school and the Italian school, which raged up to the eve of the Revolution.

Grétry and Gluck differed widely in genius, but their views on music were the same. For both of them expression was everything; neither could conceive the idea of separating words from music, and even in overtures and ritournelles they sought to maintain a direct relation with the text that had preceded or was about to follow.

The pure French school without doubt set to musical inspiration limits that were far too narrow; but the contrary excess has been observed in that Italian school which a brilliant genius has brought to prominence in our day, and which has in turn been modified by French influence until it more nearly approaches the happy medium discovered by the great Mozart. From a philosophical point of view, hesitation would not be possible in making a choice between the two opposite standpoints since the question of technical methods is so largely one of moral character. Gluck comprehends music after the manner of the ancient Greeks; his austere inspiration presages harmonies that would be more in place in the field of battle than on the operatic stage.

The same spirit is apparent in the plastic arts. Though Pigalle and Falconet maintain French sculpture in a relatively high position in Europe, there is imparted to it no decided impulse such as made architecture advance after 1760. Antique severity and simplicity is the style aimed at, and all fantastic curves and strange and artificial ornamental forms are inexorably banished. The hôtel des Monnaies, the beautiful edifices of the place Louis XV, and in larger if not faultless proportions the St. Geneviève or Panthéon of Soufflot attest a profound modification of taste, but do not foretell the peculiar turn the classical school is to take when it everywhere sets to reproducing Greek temples, as though there could be in architecture any absolute type which should not vary according to climate or customs.

A like revolution is to be observed in the art of painting.[e] New influences acted upon the artists. As fewer convents and churches were built and the age was not one of devotion, there were fewer religious pictures produced. Since the king and the high personages had not the "great taste" of Louis XIV, there were fewer historical paintings. There were fewer vast wall spaces and expansive domes to be covered with colour. A different architecture, especially in the interior of private edifices, demands a different school of painting. Another variety of Mæcenases arose — the farmers-general, the *parvenus* of finance and stock-jobbing who no longer had the ambition to imitate the grand monarch at a distance, but abandoned themselves to their own instincts, which were not elevating: the actresses who set the fashions gave the tone to the city and to the court, and like La

Guimard had fine mansions built for themselves; finally there were the great ladies whose great ambition was to be taken for actresses. For the new world there must be a new kind of art. To ornament the cosy salons, the boudoirs, the *petits appartements* of the *petites maisons* the canvases of the preceding century were of too vast proportions, too severe, too majestic. More appropriate were mythological scenes lightly treated, pastorals, *fêtes galantes*, hunting scenes, the so-called *scènes champêtres*, or even readings, conversations, and concerts (sacred terms). The great French landscape painters Poussin and Claude Lorrain (Claude Gelée) could no longer have recognised the trees, the skies, and the fountains of the canvases *à la mode;* for they are the trees, the skies, the fountains of the opera. The theatre, which had invaded private life, also ruled over the arts.

If painting had been entirely abandoned to the taste of the Mæcenases of the day there would have been a marked decadence. Fortunately, about the middle of the century, with the periodic picture exhibitions, art criticism was born. Diderot, in his *Salons* (1765–1767), Grimm, and Laharpe jeered at the caprices in fashion, upheld the true but unrecognised painters, and encouraged the return to nature. It was these men that revealed to the public the genius of Chardin and Greuze and extolled genre painting.

The *fêtes galantes* and the genre painting produced some real artists, and in spite of their faults they developed a true French art. The greatest of these painters had gone to Rome in vain; the influence of antiquity upon them was almost nothing. From the Eternal City they came back the eighteenth-century Frenchmen they went. If one would seek the real master of Watteau, Boucher, Chardin, and Greuze, he will be found in Rubens with his Marie de' Medici series.[b]

The achievements of these men, were, however, but a prelude to what was to follow; the art of grand, historical painting, dead for more than half a century, was to live again in a period of exceptional brilliancy. A certain eager, determined young man, a relation and pupil of Boucher but without as yet any definite, artistic aim, was sent as laureate, in 1775, to Rome, where he came under the influence of Winckelmann and his *History of Ancient Art* (*Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*), published in 1764. Acted upon by a double current, that of Winckelmann's enthusiastic æstheticism and the republican fervour of Rousseau and Mably, the painter Louis David was formed. From the one source he received his subjects and his inspiration, from the other his sense of form and his tendency to paint figures that are like statues, just as the sculptors early in the eighteenth century were given to making statues that were like painted figures.[c]

SCIENCE

It was only in the first half of the seventeenth century that the great men of letters, like Descartes and Pascal, appear as great savants. Later on Bossuet, Fénelon, and Fontenelle are the sole littérateurs who show a certain acquaintance with science — and that particularly because the sciences, thanks to Descartes, were considered a branch of philosophy. On the contrary, in the eighteenth century every great man of letters is also a savant. D'Alembert was above all a mathematician. Condillac published treatises on arithmetic, algebra, mechanics, and astronomy. The less known but assuredly estimable portion of Montesquieu's writings are his works in the sciences. Rousseau prepared himself for his *Émile* by arduous scientific study, followed the courses of the chemist Rouellé and composed a treatise

on botany. Diderot wrote on mathematics, on the cohesion of solid bodies, and published numerous scientific articles in his *Encyclopœdia*.[1]

Poets, great ladies, and great lords, beginning with the regent Orleans — everyone was interested in scientific discovery; it was the topic of the salon and the boudoir as of the academies. Nothing contributed more to form the spirit of the eighteenth century, at once classical and full of innovation, frivolous and serious, loving light literature and weighty demonstration. The philosophers, applying to political social questions the rigour of scientific methods, gave a more resolute turn to the war upon the past. Finally the great discoveries in every direction, exalting the imagination and inflating all hearts with pride, contributed not a little to inculcate in the French that absolute confidence in the all-powerfulness of reason.

In the eighteenth century the new methods of analytical geometry and the infinitesimal calculus continued to be developed. Although French astronomers seem to play but a secondary rôle in the great celestial discoveries of the age, we must not forget the work of D'Alembert and of Clairaut. The superiority and the special work of the French in this century is the application of pure mathematics to astronomy.

What was retarding the progress of chemistry was that those impalpable and invisible substances called gases were little understood. Especially the most active of these gases, oxygen, was unknown [until 1774]. Lavoisier gave to Priestley's discovery of oxygen its full value and recognised the important rôle played by this gas in nature. He was the first to establish clearly that air is not a simple body.[2] In 1783 Lavoisier decomposed water and showed that it was composed of oxygen and hydrogen. Now that oxygen was known, chemistry became a science. Assisted by Guyton de Morveau, Fourcroy, and Berthollet, Lavoisier established the chemical nomenclature in 1787 and dowered the new science with a precise and supple language lending itself to all its perfections, and which was adopted by the whole of Europe.[b] Hitherto the terminology of the science had been a matter of whim and caprice. Such names as "liver of sulphur," "mercury of life," "horned moon," "the double secret," "the salt of many virtues," and the like, had been accepted without protest by the chemical world. With such a terminology continued progress was as impossible as human progress without speech. The new chemistry of Lavoisier and his *confrères*, following the model set by zoölogy half a century earlier, designated each substance by a name instead of a phrase, applied these names according to fixed rules, and, in short, classified the chemical knowledge of the time and brought it into a system, lacking which no body of knowledge has full title to the name of science.[d]

The eighteenth century abounds in savants who, renouncing all pretensions to the universality affected in the Middle Ages, devoted their entire lives to a special branch of zoölogy. Buffon, appointed intendant of the jardin du Roi, began his great *Natural History*. From 1749 to 1767 he published fifteen volumes upon quadrupeds in collaboration with Daubenton. From 1770 to 1780 appeared the *History of Birds*, in nine volumes, with the collaboration of Guéneau de Montbélard, the Abbé Bexon, Sonnini de Manoncourt. Afterwards came the *History of Minerals*. The sequel to

[1 No attempt has been made to give in this chapter an account of the great *Encyclopœdia* and its influence, since the matter has already been fully treated. See above, pp. 62–64.]

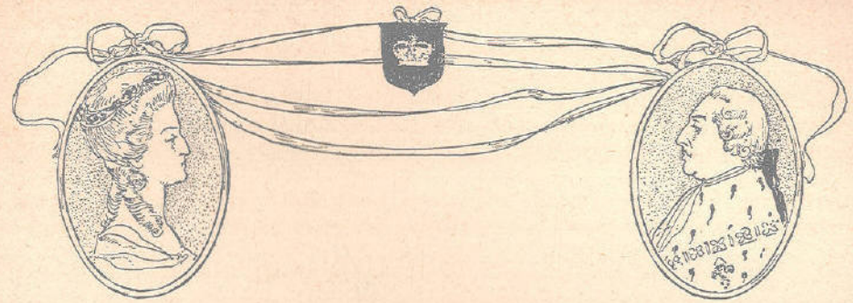
[2 In common with other chemists of the time, Lavoisier supposed oxygen gas itself to be a compound. He considered its components to be a metal oxygen combined with the alleged element heat; Dr. Priestley thought it a compound of positive electricity and "phlogiston"; and Humphry Davy, a little later, supposed it to be a compound of oxygen and light.[d]]

[1717–1789 A.D.]

this vast work, *Reptiles*, *Fishes*, etc., was left for Lacépède. In 1788 Buffon's masterpiece, *Les Époques de la Nature*, appeared. Herein are displayed his great theories on the unity of nature's plan proceeding "according to a primitive and general design; on the continuous scale of beings from the zoöphyte to man; on the mutability of species, which may modify their organs to accommodate themselves to new environments, and finally on the distribution of species over the surface of the globe. For the first time we see these great philosophic ideas applied to natural history. Buffon's pompous style, a certain taste for lofty paraphrase in place of a single word, a certain tendency to generalisation, exposed him to the criticism of some of his contemporaries. Réaumur reproaches him with reasoning too much and Buffon reproached Réaumur with the very strange criticism of observing too much. Daubenton separated from Buffon because the latter mutilated his anatomical demonstrations. He jeered at certain too classic phrases, as "the lion is the king of animals," saying that the animals had no king.

The greatest physiological discovery of the eighteenth century was made [in part] by Lavoisier. He explained in 1785 the phenomena of respiration. This discovery Daremberg calls "the greatest of modern times after the circulation of the blood."[b] It should not be overlooked, however, that here again Lavoisier was following in the footsteps of Priestley, and that Scheele in Sweden, Spallanzani in Italy, and Davy in England must be credited with a share in clearing up the mystery of respiration.[a]

To the reign of Louis XV also belonged Réaumur, who devised the thermometer and thermometric scale bearing his name; the botanists Adanson and Bernard de Jussieu; Lacaille, who went to the Cape of Good Hope in 1750 to chart the heavens; Bouguer and La Condamine, who sailed to the equator in 1736, while Clairaut and Maupertuis were in the arctic regions to determine the measuring of a degree and the shape of the earth.[c] But a far greater coterie of scientists was to come upon the scene about the close of the century, rendering French science of a later generation illustrious. Meantime literature rather than science is the key-note of the Age of Voltaire.[a]



CHAPTER V

LOUIS XVI AND MARIE ANTOINETTE

[1774–1789 A.D.]

THERE is nothing better proved by a course of historic study than the strange fact that the people on the very verge of change and revolution have no idea that anything is about to take place. A nation is always taken by surprise when its institutions are overthrown, like a child when its house of cards is toppled over by its own height. Contemporaries in other lands are generally quite as blind; but the spectator from a distance of time sees everything more clearly.

All the performers in the great drama, of which we are not yet come to the final act, were now upon the scene. There were Louis XVI, aged twenty years, gentle and kind; Louis XVIII, aged nineteen, clearer in intellect and more marked in character; and Charles X, aged seventeen, stubborn and proud. These were the three grandsons of Louis XV, and all attained the throne. But there was another personage at that time alive who also the likeness of a kingly crown had on: it was a little child of seven months old, a grandson of the false and dissolute regent, who, after a long period of struggle and obscurity, emerges at the end of his career as Louis Philippe. Four Bourbons and a Bonaparte were all preparing for their parts in the year 1774—three princes, a boy playing the hoop in the streets of Ajaccio, and a baby in arms.

A young king is always popular; he has made no personal or public enemies, and there is a length of reign before him which will enable him to reward his friends. But there perhaps never was so popular a king as Louis XVI. Married at sixteen to the beautiful daughter of the emperor of Austria, one year his junior, he and Marie Antoinette, when their establishment was formed, presented to the admiring eyes of the Parisians the model of a perfectly happy life. They reminded the observers of some of those charming fairy tales where royal shepherds and shepherdesses exchange the cares of power for the enjoyments of Arcadia; and if the enjoyments were a little expensive, and Arcadia a domain filled with princes and princesses,

the interest of the story was only enhanced, and the voices of the real Corydons — the starving peasantry and angry men of the towns — were drowned in the shouts of jubilee.

The finances were utterly ruined; the expenses of the state greatly exceeded the utmost possible extent of its income; and the goodness of the young monarch's heart came forth in the first speech which reached the public ear: "We will have no loans, no fresh burdens, and no credit"; and, leaving his ministers to devise means of paying the army and navy, the interest of the funds, and the overwhelming salaries of the national servants, he conducted his gay and brilliant wife to Rheims, where he was crowned (1775) with greater splendour than Louis XIV, and with a prouder display of feudal ceremony and knightly magnificence than had been dreamed of by Philip Augustus.

As if to make up for his own youth and inexperience, he called to his council the count de Maurepas, at this time seventy-three years of age, who had been disgraced twenty-five years before by the favourite Pompadour, and had been busying himself ever since in studying the modern philosophies by which the world was going to be reformed. But there are some men whom years cannot make old, nor any study of philosophy wise and prudent. The new minister was as firm a believer in Arcadia as the Phyllises and Strephons of Paris. He would bring back a golden age, where the dreams of philanthropists and the wisdom of statesmen should be united. He had read the glowing descriptions of a state of society where all men were equal before the law; where the rich could not oppress the poor; where the crown was the fountain of perennial grace; and where the obsolete prejudices of a useless and supererogatory church were reduced to the purest essence of the Christian precepts, and where there was neither heresy nor superstition. He put his theories into practice with the same thoughtless levity as he had maintained them in the sparkling *conversaziones* of the capital, and gave open manifestation of his principles and designs by appointing to the management of the finances one of the least-known writers in the *Encyclopædia*, in which the most sweeping changes in government, society, and religion were agitated with the greatest eloquence and amazing success: his name was Turgot.

With a prime-minister tapping his golden snuff-box and uttering declamations about the rights of man, and a chief of the finances, one of the most honest and intellectual men in France, and imbued with all the doctrines of the school of Voltaire and Diderot, the enthusiastic young marquises and abbés, who united politics and romance in almost equal quantities, saw an end of all the miseries of life. A new era had opened on mankind, and its inauguration was intrusted to a king of the most amiable disposition, and a queen who shrouded the grandeurs of the noblest place in Europe, and the pride of the highest birth, in a graceful simplicity of manners and the most childlike enjoyment of the pleasures of her age and rank.[b]

Louis XVI was twenty years of age at his accession to the throne. His father, the devout dauphin, had intrusted his education to the duke de la Vauguyon, a noble of rigid and ascetic piety. This man bred up the future heir to the throne of France as if he were destined to be a monk; and took care to render him not only scrupulously ignorant of all polite learning, but even of history and the science of government. The very external appearance of Louis betrayed this tutelage: he was slovenly, melancholy, ungraceful, bashful, and so diffident that his eyes often shrank from the regard of his meanest subject; with all this, he had been inspired with such a religious horror of carnal affections, that he remained for many years on no closer

terms than those of mere politeness with his young and lovely queen. Such was the character of the new sovereign, called to administer the realm at the most critical period of its history.[c]

Before proceeding with the events of his reign we may well make some study of the characteristics of the queen who had such sway for good and evil over him.[a]

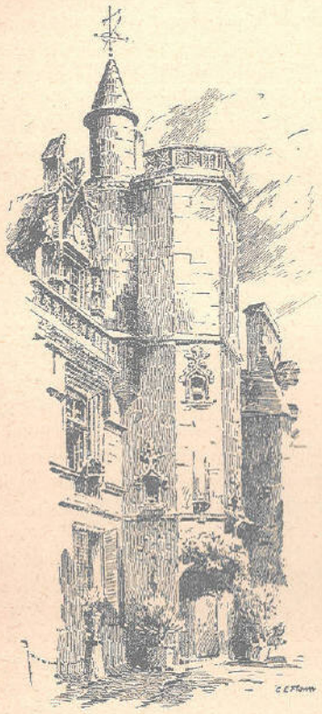
Since her arrival in France, Marie Antoinette had met with opposition such as women seldom forget. As she had been forced to bear it silently, this hard situation made her false and artful. Maria Theresa, her mother, knew the court of Versailles well, and yet she committed the error of requesting diplomatically through M. de Merez, her ambassador, that her relation, Mademoiselle de Lorraine, and the prince de Lambex, should rank after princes of the blood of the house of Bourbon, at the marriage of her daughter with the dauphin of France. To please the dauphiness who wished it and Maria Theresa who requested it, Louis XV had thought he ought to make it an affair of state. But the ladies of the court from whom Louis XV expected the most submission and deference had played an obstinate and proud part, making a resistance which was invincible to the formal demand of the king. Their stubbornness went so far as to declare that they would give up the ball rather than be deprived of the right of dancing first. The dauphiness was so vexed for her part that she procured a copy of the letters that Louis XV had written to the peers; she shut them up in her cash-box and added these three words, "I shall remember." From that moment she resolved to exclude as much as possible titled ladies from her house.

The young dauphiness had an angelic face: the whiteness of her complexion was striking, her colouring bright and clear; her features were regular, her figure slim, but her eyes were subject to inflammation though fine and agreeable. She had the Austrian thick lip. She was affectionate, lively, anxious to please, and well instructed by her mother as to what she must do in order to be loved at court, if she had wished to follow her instructions. The pulpits, academies, the most brilliant societies, the papers, the almanacs of the Muses, all praised her. Flattery in France still retained the form and tone of the grand reign of Louis XIV.

Marie Antoinette had been brought up by her mother to be one day queen of France; but she no sooner arrived at Versailles than she began to shake off all that was troublesome. She went on foot, dismissing her equerry, accompanied only by one or two ladies of the court. She used to invite her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law to dine and sup and went to meals with them unceremoniously. She was kind, and considerate, and often delicate in her charities. Once a stag wounded at the king's hunt struck a poor peasant with his horns; the dauphiness ran to his help, took his wife into her carriage, caressed her, and gave her a pension. Marie Antoinette also encouraged and protected musicians. She knew Latin, German, Italian, and had soon mastered French. With this kind of character the dauphiness had much to suffer in France. She had to swallow insults, and assist in silence at the catastrophe which seemed to overthrow the foundation of the Austrian faction at the court of France, a revolution which kept her isolated and left to herself at a court where Madame du Barry reigned supreme.

Marie Antoinette with difficulty endured the precedence which the king's favourite had over her at court; the dauphiness, naturally given to shyness and reserve, could not forgive her. Her first act on gaining authority and influence was to shut Du Barry up in a convent the very day that her husband succeeded his grandfather.

The young couple lived at court in an exemplary and retired way under the trying circumstances, each endeavouring to please the other in everything. The dauphiness began to win her husband's affections; she knew well how to surround him with comforts; she understood the weakness of his character, and according to her mother's instructions she resolved to exercise all the power of her sex and beauty on his mind. Aspiring from an early age to being one day able to govern in his name, a witticism, a caress at the right moment were the means she employed to subdue this young prince. The tactful concessions and refusals of her favours were her means of gaining his attachment; we see the king, during his last years, fearing, obeying, and loving her.



HÔTEL DE CLUNY

She was constantly being opposed by her aunts and sisters-in-law, which embittered her character and was the first cause of her misfortunes. The aunts she deprived of their prerogative, and consigned them to live at Bellevue or at Meudon with the retired old ladies. She treated her sisters-in-law with all the haughtiness of an archduchess and queen of France. They often retaliated by words even superior in haughtiness.

Finding on all sides contradictions, and the refusal of that respect due to royalty, she became more and more a stranger to France. She soon discovered a sarcastic character. Instead of endeavouring to gain the public praise, she assumed a contradictory tone, which daily increased her enemies. She thought everything should be permitted her because of her birth and rank. With no regard for the French character, naturally irritable, she roused the resentment of the nobility in office. They formed a centre of opposition, which did not spare her, and obliged her to form an intimate society of her own, and as this society was ill-chosen, having been formed by a frivolous young princess who thought of nothing but dress and pleasure, the best part of the court suspected her morals and habits.

She had scarcely become queen of France when she started the fashion of wearing large feathers. When she passed in ceremony with the ladies-in-waiting along the galleries, it was like a forest of plumes, raised a foot and a half high and waving freely over the heads. The courtiers, who could not be persuaded to adopt these fashions nor to copy the queen every day, called these feathers horse ornaments. In the month of February, 1775, she exaggerated the fashion of feathers still more. She invented wonderful headdresses representing English gardens, mountains, and forests. The king, whose tastes were simple, only spoke timidly about these extraordinary ornaments. But at the commencement of 1776 he gave her half of the diamonds he had as dauphin and told her to be contented with these which would not cost anything. But this advice from the king did not change her, and the rage for feathers arrived at such a pitch, that sometimes one

feather would cost as much as 50 louis [£47 sterling]. "Your charms," added Louis XVI, "do not need adornment." Maria Theresa joined the king in trying to cure the queen of her futile tastes which she developed at such an early age. The queen sent her her portrait ornamented with large and beautiful feathers; Maria Theresa sent it back, with a note to this effect: "I would willingly have accepted the portrait of the queen of France, but I could not accept one which only represented a comedy actress." But nothing could alter Marie Antoinette's taste for these ridiculous ornaments.[d]

Marie Antoinette's faults consisted in a thoughtless need of affectionate intercourse, and a desire to please and to charm. A spirit of dissipation, of levity, of heedlessness became, together with favouritism, another source of evil. The queen could never be made to interest herself in any serious occupation. She is much blamed for her very incomplete education, but it must be acknowledged that this is not a sufficient reason for believing that she sought out and read the worst books. Joseph II speaks of "indecencies" with which the queen, his sister, had filled her mind by her reading; but it is unnecessary to exaggerate, or even to give full credit to Joseph's words, as he went to the farthest extreme.

The thousand accounts of her imprudent visits to the balls of the opera, to the three theatres, to horse and sledge races, also of nocturnal promenades upon the terrace at Versailles, always without the king, who only cared for sport, lotto, and blindman's buff, played for "wagers," filled the memoirs of the time with an inexhaustible variety of details. The queen's extravagance became excessive, particularly in 1776 and 1777; the reason did not consist only in the graciousness which made her unable to refuse anything to those around her, but, over and above that, she was powerless to resist certain fascinations of finery and luxury. More than once, for instance, her taste for precious stones carried her away, and this was a subject of humiliation and amazement to her mother, who wished to inspire her with a serious sense of her dignity.

The other instance of grave extravagance was gambling. The play of the king and queen at court is traditional. It is well known how much the passion for play had increased in the previous reign; one has only to read Walpole to recall how princesses of the blood gave themselves up to this excessive gambling. Mercy-Argenteau in his letters is inexhaustible on the subject: "The queen was anxious," he writes towards the end of 1776, "to play at faro. She begged the king to permit them to summon the bankers of the gaming tables from Paris. The bankers arrived October 30th and dealt the cards all the night and morning of the 31st. The queen remained until five o'clock in the morning. Her majesty dealt all evening and into the morning of November 1st (All Saints' Day); she herself played until three o'clock in the morning. The harm was that such an evening, extending into the morning of so solemn a festival, should be so spent, and it caused much public gossip."

Marie Antoinette won and lost in an evening 500 louis; she was obliged to go to the king the following day, who, without scolding her, paid it out of his private purse. From that also ensued many mischievous rumours, which the papers spread throughout Europe concerning the cheating carried on in the play at Marly, and about the suspicious behaviour of an Englishman named Smith admitted to the gaming table of the queen at Fontainebleau, who had won from the princes 500,000 francs.

These rumours aroused the indignation of Joseph II and of Maria Theresa. Joseph exclaimed that the court of France had become a gambling

hell; he wrote in May, 1777, that if they did not understand and prevent it, "the revolution would be cruel." The empress sent a message to her daughter, to the effect that she was rushing to her doom; that she must instantly and at any cost cut short her passion for play; she threatened to write severely to the king about it, if she did not see a thorough change at once.[e]

Leaving her to her more or less innocent frivolities, let us examine the Herculean efforts of the ministers to slay the hydra-headed monster of deficit and release the gold of which she and her kind had scattered so much while the people starved in herds.[a]

THE VAIN REFORMS OF TURGOT

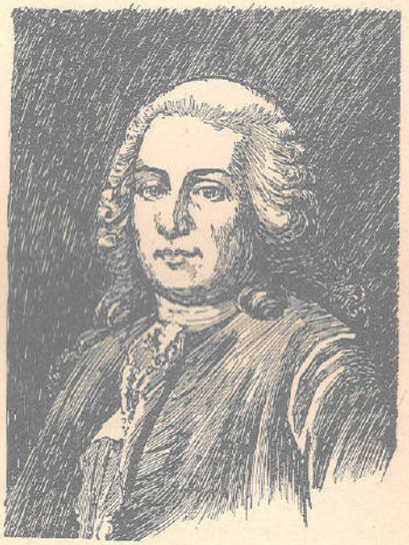
The count de Maurepas was an aged, experienced, cunning man of the world, somewhat resembling the prince Talleyrand of later days, unrivalled in address, in epigram, and persiflage. He was too enlightened not to have progressed with his age. He approached in principle more nearly to Choiseul than to Aiguillon. This became manifest in filling up the places of the ministry: the count de Vergennes, the ambassador who at Constantinople had seconded the views of Choiseul against Russia, was recalled to preside over the foreign department. The hated Maupeou and Terray were both discarded. Turgot, the friend of the economists, the statesman vaunted by the philosophers, replaced the latter; his name was a pledge of reform and amelioration. The first act of the new government was to dismiss the parliament of Maupeou, and re-establish the ancient judges and courts which had been dissolved by Louis XV.

Turgot announced his financial plans and projects of reform. The principal of these were to do away with *corvées* and such taxes as weighed exclusively on the people, establishing a territorial impost that would be borne equally by all classes of society, nobility and clergy not excluded.

But these privileged orders, instead of deeming themselves called on to make sacrifices to the state, thought, on the contrary, that they were unjustly oppressed. Neither could be induced to make sacrifices. Noblesse and clergy, the parties of Choiseul and Aiguillon, united against the audacious innovator Turgot, who pretended that the privileged classes should support, according to their means, the burdens of the state. What is more astonishing, the parliament or legists united with these orders; and thus the monarch's ministry, in its attempt to relieve the people and middle classes, was marred and checked and flung aback into the ancient and pernicious courses of absolute monarchy. Never did blindness and selfishness combine more grossly, or more deservedly merit the ruin and the punishment they afterwards incurred.

Had Louis now summoned the states-general, they would have been grateful for their existence and for the influence which they afterwards wrested from the monarch. At this time, not only was the monarch beloved, but his queen was still uncalumniated, and had not yet been made to lose the affections of the people. But neither Maurepas, nor Louis, had the courage to rely on the popular mass. The states-general were still the bugbear that they had been for centuries; and the sovereign, rather than recur to this his only support, the only body that could give him funds, and confidence, and stability, remained leaning alternately on the frail prop of mere court parties, sharing and bringing upon himself all the odium and contempt which the ignorance, the selfishness, and the empty pride of such counsellors earned from the public voice.

Turgot fell before this opposition of the privileged orders. Malesherbes, his friend and brother minister, fell also: both were successively dismissed. The unfortunate Marie Antoinette is accused of having influenced the king to get rid of them. Some of the courtiers might indeed have incited her to this act; but the blame rests not with her. Turgot and Malesherbes fell by the opposition of the noblesse and parliament, the latter then allowed to possess a legislative veto. They were sacrificed not to the queen but to circumstances. The ideas of Turgot had embraced a vast scheme of amelioration. They were not limited to an equable and territorial tax, but contained a free municipal system, and an assembly of the deputies of the provinces to supersede the parliament in their functions of consenting to new imposts. An edict issued to establish one of his principles, the free commerce of grain, unfortunately did not produce favourable results. The year being one of general scarcity, the want of corn was attributed to the edict, and Turgot's theories lost a great part of their influence.



TURGOT

A sedition broke out in Paris, occasioned by famine. Similar scenes took place throughout the kingdom, occasioned by the indigence, the unfixed and suffering state of the peasant population. The police, it seems, were not active to repress the tumult. Turgot declared that it was excited, not by the effects of his edict, but by his enemies. Maurepas represented this to the king as false and presumptuous. That minister already began to be disgusted with the popular ally that overshadowed him. This took place in 1775. In the following year, Turgot, who still held his ground, caused six edicts to be presented to the parliament. The chief ones ordered the abolition of the *corvée* as well as of certain monopolies and corporations. The parliament refused to register: the king overcame the opposition in a bed of justice; but the clamours of the noblesse at court were too great for Louis to resist. "It is only Monsieur Turgot and I who love the people," said the monarch; but the minister was nevertheless dismissed, and, as we have said, was followed in his retreat by Malesherbes.

An imitator of Turgot, one who had caught up the mania for reform, was the count de St. Germain. He was created minister at war, and his first act was to reorganise the army. He introduced the Prussian discipline; and in his love of change broke up all the old regiments of household troops and *mousquetaires*, and much diminished the bodyguard. Such reductions, however called for by economy, had the effect of disgusting the noblesse, which exclusively composed those corps, with the very name of reform; and was one of the great causes that accelerated the revolution, by disorganising the army, and leaving no force to resist the insurrectionary movements of the populace.

To Turgot succeeded Clugny in the department of finance. He re-established the *corvée*, to gratify those under whose auspices he was

elevated.[1] He died in a few months and was succeeded by Taboureau. Maurepas held still the place of prime minister, or rather that of favourite. Without principles or party, his sole object was to reign; and thus the true administrators of the government had to please not only a royal but a ministerial master. Those were stormy days, however, in which incapacity could not long hold the helm. Louis XVI was himself impatient at the difficulties of the government, and the feeble attempts of his ministry to surmount them. Necker was recommended as a financier capable of effecting wonders; and he was accordingly appointed director of the treasury, subordinate to the controller-general Taboureau.[c]

NECKER'S MINISTRY

Necker was a Genevan banker who had been established and naturalised in France for several years. He had acquired a large fortune which he put to a noble use. His honesty and loyalty were proverbial and his credit unlimited.

He had a power of another kind. His salon was one of the most influential and most select in Paris, thanks to Madame Necker, who presided over it with remarkable ability. A woman of cultivated mind and enthusiastic temperament, she had grouped round her a society of *littérateurs* like Marmontel, the abbé Raynal, Morellet; a society on which she impressed a code of manners, severe, grave, and even slightly pedantic. She shared her husband's ambition, which was extreme, and toiled no less actively than himself to satisfy it. Both, says Morellet,[d] had an insatiable desire for fame.

Necker, not content that as a banker he was rich and powerful enough to hold his own against the ministers, had been ambitious of the reputation of an author, and had made his literary début with a eulogy of Colbert, which the Academy crowned in 1773. Subsequently he wrote against Turgot's edicts on grains. He discussed the principles of the economists with much sagacity, practical intelligence, and independence. Necker was of too haughty a character to affiliate himself with a sect; he had the self-confidence of a man who had risen by his own exertions, who felt himself to be animated by upright and generous intentions, and supported, to use his own expression, on a basis of virtue (*un fonds de vertu*). His philanthropy, unlike that of Turgot, was pompous and showy, and with him the necessity of display was not less imperative than the necessity to act. "His writings," says Soulavie,[d] who draws his portrait with as much discernment as truth, "breathed throughout the language of humanity; they gave evidence of an exquisite sensibility, a republican tendency, a style analogous to that of Rousseau, a brilliant imagination. They were adorned with figures and a tone of sentiment alike unknown in works on administration and which distinguished them from all other books of this nature." Hitherto it had always been an intendant who had been placed at the head of the finances, never a banker. Necker began with a somewhat bombastic act of disinterestedness. He refused the salary of his office. He then broke with the traditions of his predecessors. He was of opinion that the finances would not be improved by changes of detail in the administration: that such methods were useless or had been exhausted.

Having suppressed the intendants of finance, on account of their powers which he found too extensive and their hostility which he feared, he ventured

[1 Marmontel calls his ministry five "months of pillage, of which the king alone was ignorant."]

on a great *coup*. On the 7th of January, 1777, he issued a considerable loan. He made this issue with ostentation and, as he did everything, in a startling manner. He divided his loan into two parts, the one consisting of ordinary annuities, repayable in annual instalments, and the other of life annuities. The day on which the treasury was opened, a long line of subscribers presented themselves; guards were posted to maintain order and the whole was subscribed for in one day, even before the edict had been laid before the parliament. The terms were moderate. Necker was aware of the skill with which the English had made use of the public credit and he intended that France should derive from it the same advantage. He drew on the personal confidence which he inspired and he was careful to maintain it by observing great regularity in the payments, especially in those to the king's household. With the money borrowed he paid off the existing deficit. Doubtless he mortgaged the future; but he maintained that the future could support the charge and that it was just to burden it because it would enjoy the advantage gained and the prosperity which the independence of the United States could not fail to create.

But opposition was inevitable. The novelty of the scheme awakened alarm. No reproach which could be made against the system of loans was spared. Was not the creation of life annuities an immoral speculation on the part of the state and one which should have been restricted instead of being extended? Was it necessary to recommence the system of handing France over to farmers of the revenue, bankers and merchants? Necker is also reproached with creating no new wealth and exhibiting the infertility of his mind. The former financiers exclaimed in their turn against what they called the invasion of bankers, and hurled criticisms at the "banker-minister."

The public taking sides for or against Necker, a terrific clamour awoke round his name. Among the arguments advanced in his favour, one of the most curious was that to increase the number of annuitants was to add to that of the government's supporters and those who dreaded its downfall. Nevertheless Necker did not succeed in quieting opposition. Nor did his character lend itself to this. An absolutist, as were all the innovating ministers of that time, he was lacking in flexibility and *sang-froid;* to this defect he added a theatrical manner and "an *amour-propre* which exceeded the ordinary measure of human vanity." Finally he was a man of money; as such his mind was bent on one subject exclusively: he believed the whole evil of the situation to reside in the finances. He imagined, and his friends repeated for him, that in paying off the deficit he was saving France.[i]

The antechambers of these princely dwellings laughed at the starving people and were far more deeply agitated with the results of the speculations on kings and governments, the tidings of which were wafted over to them by every ship that came from the shores of America. Here were the very questions which had filled the works of the Encyclopædists, carried out to the arbitrament of arms before their eyes: "No taxes without representation"; "no supreme power except by the will of the people"; "no dominant sect"; "no privileged birth"; "no inequality of condition." Here were the exact statements in their theoretical essays translated into the reality of life—a vast struggle fairly entered upon between the British colonies, swelling with those new ideas of universal freedom and fraternity, and the old British crown relying on prescription and experience.

In 1774, the year of the king's accession, a declaration of rights had been sent over to Europe along with other documents, by which the sympathies of all the generous and enlightened were demanded on behalf of the patriotic

cause. Already the American leaders had successfully resisted the Stamp Act of 1767. They had also opposed a newly imposed tax on tea and other commodities for the benefit of the mother country; and, as is generally the case between near relations, the quarrel became embittered by the identity of blood and character. Obstinate Jonathan would not hear reason, and obstinate John would not condescend to speak it.

Washington was now appointed commander-in-chief of all the colonial forces by the different provincial assemblies; war broke out and blood was shed in April, 1775, and on the 4th of July, 1776, congress issued a declaration of independence, and took the name of United States. Paris was in as high a state of excitement and exasperation as Boston or New York. The dreams of philanthropists had taken bodily shape, and it was indispensable for the glory of France and the dignity of human nature that the champions of liberty should be supported. Hundreds of young and ardent enthusiasts took out their coroneted swords from the chest crowned with armorial bearings, where their ancestors of the feudal times had laid them, to draw them in the cause of freedom, equality, and a republic. But a bolder step was soon forced on the unwilling king, and he despatched an emissary in the name of France with credentials to the congress of America, and soldiers in the uniform of France to support the insurrection. Twelve sail of the line, under the count d'Estaing, were their convoy across the Atlantic, and it must have been only with an affected surprise that Louis reaped the fruits of this interference, in a war with England.

In no other way, even by open hostilities, could he have equally benefited the men of Massachusetts and New York. The marquis de La Fayette, one of the highest of the old nobility, was foremost in the combats on their side, and the promulgation of their principles. He was citizen La Fayette, and scorned the title of marquis as a mark of the inferiority of his brother the smith or ploughman. Smiths and ploughmen in all parts of France began to hear, from returning soldiers, reports of the proceedings across the sea. They heard of the gradual progress of the popular cause; of battles where the English, when conquerors, were not inclined to pursue their advantage against their countrymen of the colonies, who only fought on American soil for the same privileges which their ancestors had won with the sword at home; of the necessity the English government accordingly experienced of employing mercenary troops of Hanoverians, Hessians, and other continental populations, to coerce the free-spirited inhabitants of the long-settled provinces on the Hudson, Delaware, and James, who had been as English in heart and feeling ten years before as the men of Warwickshire or Devon.

They discussed all these things in their shops and barns, and began to think what an oppressed and cowardly race they were to submit to a frippery peerage and worldly church, while people of their own class were achieving liberty and good government by courage and combination. Louis XVI, as king and liberal, was in a most painful and contradictory position. Every success his confederates won over his enemies was a fresh blow at the monarchic principles; every success gained by his enemies over his allies strengthened the hands of his declared and inveterate foe. If England was weakened, monarchy felt the stroke; if England was strengthened, France would feel her vengeance — an unhappy fate where failure or triumph was equally to be feared. But of the two, it was better to deprive England of her power to harm; and the whole strength of France was therefore roused to revenge the humiliation of the Seven Years' War. France had come out of it stripped of her ships and colonies. She had surrendered Canada and

some of her western islands, and all her hopes in India. Her rival had planted her foot on the golden soil of Madras and Bengal, and was establishing an empire in the territories of the Great Mogul, whose very name was a mysterious sound of grandeur and wealth. From all that granary of riches and fame the French younger sons were kept out by the Treaty of Paris (1763), and they looked with disgust and hatred on the rapidly acquired fortunes of the civil servants of the English India Company, who went out poor, and came back with the fabulous treasures of oriental kings. The bitterness of international hatred had never been so great. In all quarters of the world France had been forced to succumb, and now was the opportunity to be revenged for lost America, for lost Hindustan, for lost Senegal, for the lost Rhine, and the re-established Pyrenees.[b]

Dareste's Account of the American Alliance

Up to this time a profound antipathy had existed between France and America. The Americans had done all they could to bring about the loss to the French of their colonies in the New World, and their ideas of religious and political independence, their Protestantism, their love of self-government were absolutely contrary to the French system and the French spirit.

But when Franklin landed on the French shores, a common sentiment animated the two countries. America desired to shake off the British yoke; France wished to be avenged for her humiliations of 1763. What was called the "maritime tyranny" of the English weighed heavily on the French. For twelve years the government had been watching for an opportunity to take their revenge. There was all the greater anxiety to seize that which presented itself, because it was known that America was destined to a great development in the near future.

The French told themselves that success would be easy; that they had been quietly recovering their strength; that with all her apparent power England was very vulnerable, for she was crushed under the weight of her debt, incapacitated from levying new imposts, and little prepared to sustain a war whose least danger to her was that of bankruptcy. It was above all imperative that she should not be allowed time to settle her quarrel with America, the adjustment of which would leave her free to turn all her forces against France. The idea of reconquering Canada naturally presented itself but was speedily abandoned.

The struggle of the Americans against the English had, says Mignet,[j] agitated Europe and especially France. The "insurgents," as the revolted colonists were called, were the objects of an incredible interest. In the cafés and public places nothing was talked of but the justice and bravery of their resistance. All whose swords were idle and whose hearts loved noble adventures desired to enlist in their service. The sight of Franklin, the severe plainness of his costume, the refined simplicity of his manners, the attractive charm of his wit, his venerable aspect, modest self-confidence, and distinguished reputation made the cause of America all the fashion.

"At this moment," he wrote a little later, in reference to the lionising of which he was the object, "I am the most remarkable person in Paris." He added in another letter: "Americans are treated here with a cordiality, respect, and affection which they never encountered in England when they were sent there." It was in France that the celebrated line was written concerning him: *Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis.* Franklin

concealed under his apparent simplicity an extreme tenacity and a shrewd intelligence. Without appearing to do so he contrived to flatter the salons, the women, the *philosophes;* to talk beneficence and philanthropy and to conquer the Parisian public. This was the way to make himself embarrassing to the government. At first they avoided according him public recognition. The king had some scruple in breaking the treaties signed with England; but Vergennes remembered that England had never failed to support rebels in France. Eventually, certain sums of money were privately placed at the disposition of the rebels, Beaumarchais undertaking to forward these supplies to America. Then some officers were sent to them. Some tobacco they were anxious to sell was purchased.

A French Officer, Early Nineteenth Century

La Fayette was twenty years old. His house, a very ancient one, was allied with all the families about the court. Eager for excitement and anxious for warlike experiences, as we have said, he was seized with a noble enthusiasm for the American cause. "My heart was enlisted," he writes in his *Mémoires.*" He set out on the 26th of April, 1777, on board a vessel chartered at his own expense, with a little band of officers who attached themselves to his fortunes. The day was gone by in which young noblemen with nothing to do were accustomed to go to Hungary to act as volunteers in war against the Turks; the cause of Poland had aroused enthusiasm, but too late and when all was over; La Fayette embraced the cause of America and set the ball rolling.

If this had been a mere piece of youthful rashness, the matter might have been of small importance. But La Fayette, besides real military qualities, exhibited an energy of will, a tact, and a spirit of discretion which were remarkable. Amongst the Americans he found strong prejudices against the French; he managed to triumph over them. He desired, he says, to be more simple, more frugal, more austere than anyone. He conformed to the customs of his new allies; he embraced their ideas and passions, he finally won their confidence by force of his disinterested conduct and his devotion; he made them adopt him. Congress, which had at first hesitated to accept his services, gave him the title of major-general and he won the friendship of Washington.

The latter, by his firmness and wisdom, triumphed over the most perplexing difficulties. In his manœuvres against Howe with troops inferior in number, arms, and discipline, he showed himself to be a great general. A lost battle, that of Brandywine, delivered Philadelphia to the English. In spite of this check and of numerous defections, neither congress, which had retired further north, nor the general-in-chief was discouraged.

But it was not enough for America to show herself capable of resistance; she must also show herself capable of conquering. The English general Burgoyne, setting out with an army from Canada, invaded the state of New

York. He entangled himself in a country which was almost a desert and denuded of the means of subsistence. The Americans, better trained for partisan warfare, harassed him, cut off his retreat, and compelled him to capitulate at Saratoga on the Hudson. The French government judged that the moment had come to throw off the mask.

It is true that there was no lack of partisans for peace. Necker declared that it was indispensable to the re-establishment of the finances. Turgot had maintained that America might without danger be left to struggle alone, seeing that even if reduced to obedience she would never be anything to the English but a burden and an encumbrance. Choiseul thought that the wisest course would be to allow the English and Americans to destroy each other. The contagion of American ideas also inspired some alarm; still this last consideration was not much heeded. All applauded the declarations of the United States, whether on account of their spirit of nobility and the pride of their sentiments, or from the joy naturally inspired by the humiliation of England; moreover, these feelings were shared by all Europe, even by the sovereigns who, like Frederick and Catherine, were glad to see England no longer in a position to interfere with their own affairs. Joseph II was perhaps the only one who refused to associate himself with the applause, saying that for his part it was his trade to be a royalist.

Franklin, all the time that he was being fêted by the most brilliant society in Paris, perseveringly pursued the object of his mission. Through the instrumentality of his secretaries, he conducted active negotiations with most of the courts of Europe. On the 6th of February, 1778, he signed two treaties with the cabinet of Versailles—the one a treaty of commerce and neutrality, the other for a defensive alliance. The commercial treaty comprised extremely important dispositions, such as the abolition of the right of aubaine,[1] the recognition of the rights of neutrals, the condemnation of paper blockades, and that of the right of search. The treaty of alliance was to take effect only in case of England's taking the initiative in an attack on France; but France and America undertook that, if that day should come, they would afford each other mutual aid and make no separate peace nor lay down their arms until after the recognition of the independence of the United States. The two treaties, although secret, were immediately known in London. The English took them as a declaration of war, hurled reproaches at Louis XVI, recalled their ambassador, and prepared for hostilities.

The alliance of France with America produced a great effect. It was curious to see Franklin, the ex-printer's apprentice, loaded with ovations at Versailles, and to behold the heir of the oldest monarchy in Europe acting as sponsor to the young republic which he commended to the good-will of other sovereigns. The principles of liberty which America was maintaining in the face of the world added to the strangeness. She had just declared that a nation has always the right to call its government to account, to participate in the legislative power, and even to rise in insurrection when such control is refused it. In reality the alliance rested solely on political, maritime, and commercial interests. It was not dictated by any sympathy of one people for another, nor by any community of ideas. La Fayette's enthusiasm was an isolated enthusiasm. Nevertheless, in the attitude of mind then prevailing in France, it was difficult for the theory of the rights of man not to find an echo; for it had a general character applicable to the Old World as well as to the New.

[1 The *droit d'aubaine* was an old feudal claim by which the property of aliens dying in France fell to the king.]

Voltaire's Last Days

The presence in Paris of Voltaire was causing at the same time an emotion of another kind. Voltaire was then more than an octogenarian. After twenty-five years of absence he solicited permission to reappear there and came to exhibit himself. An old man who, under the frosts of age, had still remained a mischievous child, he appeared to give his attention only to social and theatrical success, seeking for effect, lavishing satire or flattery to that end, stirred in short by a senile mania for ostentation. He desired to bless Franklin's grandson, laying his hands on his head and pronouncing the words: "God and liberty." He wished to kiss the hand of Turgot, that hand which had, he said, set its signature to the people's happiness.

Lodged in the hôtel of the marquis de Villette, he was there visited with the strangest eagerness of curiosity by a generation which devoured his works without having ever seen himself. The queen and the count of Artois would have gone to see him had not Louis XVI forbidden it. The Academy violated its customs in order to send him a complimentary deputation. His bust was crowned at the Théâtre-Français.

VOLTAIRE

It is asserted that the journey hastened his end. He fell ill and died on the 30th of May, 1778, amidst the clamour he occasioned. Clamour was his element; his diminished forces did not allow him to endure it. He was stifled by the enthusiasm of his admirers and the hatred of his enemies. His death had the effect of still further augmenting the agitation which was going on about his name; thus the boisterous popularity of his works has served to create an illusion as to the influence which he exercised. He propagated irreligion and contributed more than any other to destroy the sense of respect. Such is the terrible responsibility which weighs on his memory. But his enemies have added to it in accusing him as well as Rousseau of having made the Revolution. The Revolution, as Droz[1] has said, was the work neither of Voltaire nor of Jean-Jacques. It was the work of all, above all of the government which succeeded neither in foreseeing it, an easy matter, nor in preventing it, a thing which would have been possible if the reforms had been carried out on a definite plan and with wisdom and energy.[2]

The Fall of Necker

The events of the war, in the meantime, occupied the unquiet minds of the French people. The loans of Necker supported the war; and the government—for Necker, with the weight of affairs upon him, personally still

held but a subordinate place—seemed inclined to repay him with little gratitude. Maurepas treated him with the proud airs of a superior, and was not the less jealous of the finance minister's talents and influence. Necker had dared to complain to the king of the insufficiency and profusion of M. de Sartinis, minister of marine, and even ventured to propose the marshal De Castries for his successor. To this offensive act of independence he added an unpardonable breach of ministerial etiquette, in publishing the *Compte Rendu*, or statement of revenue and expenditure.

Publicity was the requisite, the indispensable support of that credit, which was Necker's only resource for carrying on the government. The necessity was not taken into consideration, but the novelty was regarded as dangerous and treasonable. The noblesse, the courtiers joined in the clamour against the rigid minister, who checked the wonted liberalities of the king, and who threatened the reform of pension and private gratuity.

The usual mode of court vengeance, calumny, was employed to blacken Necker. Envy and spleen, however, no longer vented itself in the mirthful shape of epigram. Tempers had grown more serious; and the low libel, as a weapon, had succeeded the song and the witticism. Necker, who should have despised such attacks, was, on the contrary, most sensible to them. Popularity was his idol. He, therefore, demanded that his libellers, whom he had discovered to be in the service of the count of Artois, should be dismissed. Maurepas, of whom he made the demand, declared this impossible. "Then," said Necker, "if I am not to have this satisfaction, at least let there be given me some mark of the royal favour, in order to confound my enemies. Grant me entrance to the council." Maurepas objected that Necker was a Protestant. "Sully was one," urged the unorthodox minister; "and if my demand be not conceded, I must resign." It was not granted; and Necker, having at first sacrificed his pride by accepting the labour and responsibility of finance minister without its rank or rights, sacrificed this place to his vanity, at the very moment when his remaining in power would have been most beneficial (1781). Maurepas died a few months after. Had Necker remained in the ministry, he might have succeeded to the first place.

Necker during his ministry operated one important change, in realising the project imagined by Turgot of creating provincial assemblies in those parts of the kingdom that had not states of their own. As these assemblies were merely to be intrusted with the task of partitioning the imposts, thus exercising administrative rather than legislative power, Necker ordered that the number of the members chosen from the commons should be equal to those of the two privileged orders united. Thus the noblesse composed a fourth, the clergy a fourth, the burgesses and unennobled proprietors of land one half. This was a precedent that afterwards decided the great question how the states-general should be organised. By it was at once secured the predominance of the middle orders, who soon transferred to great legislative rights and questions the same share of influence that had been granted them merely in the office of regulating the levy of the taxes. Necker, who had few political ideas, did not see the tendency of his scheme. It equally escaped the jealous eyes of the court. The parliament had perspicacity enough to espy the importance of the measure, and it formed one great cause of their discontent against Necker. It will soon be seen how decisive the arrangement proved in giving a republican form to the representative assembly of the nation.

The year of Necker's dismissal was nevertheless a glorious one for France and America. The minister of marine, De Castries, chosen by him, proved

his talents by the successes which his combination and activity procured. A French army, wafted over the Atlantic, united with that of Washington, and outnumbered the British, whilst the French naval force, concentrated in the Chesapeake, was superior in those seas, and materially aided the operations of the land army. Sir Henry Clinton commanded in New York, Cornwallis in Virginia. Threatening both points, and thus preventing them from mutual aid, Washington and the French suddenly turned their combined force against the Virginian army. Cornwallis fortified himself in Yorktown; and he was soon attacked by the French on one side, and by the Americans on the other. The two gallant nations, rivalling each other in zeal, could not fail to be victorious; the English were beaten from their works, and Lord Cornwallis was reduced to the disgrace of capitulation.

Many noble names, soon to be famed in French annals, here first distinguished themselves. In addition to La Fayette and Rochambeau, were the duke de Lauzun, afterwards de Biron, who perished in the Revolution, Alexander Berthier, Matthew Dumas, the viscount de Noailles. Charles de Lameth, whose voice with that of La Fayette was heard in the French chamber of deputies, was wounded in the action.

At sea, too, the count de Grasse had the advantage over Hood. Spain wrested Minorca from England. In short, the last year of a mere courtier's administration, that of Maurepas, might have contented the thirst for glory and humbling of Britain that inspired Choiseul. The triumph was short, however. America, indeed, kept her advantages, and won honourable peace by victory; whilst France and Spain met with reverses to counterbalance her success. In April, 1782, the French and British fleets under Count de Grasse and Admiral Rodney, the former consisting of thirty-four, the latter of thirty-six sail, encountered each other in the West Indian seas. The action commenced on the morning of the 12th of April, the lines closing, and the French supporting the attack with intrepid valour. De Grasse had his ships full of troops, destined for the conquest of Jamaica. In a close engagement these might have proved an aid. They proved to the French admiral a source of embarrassment, the cannonade making dreadful havoc amongst their numbers, and communicating terror and confusion to the crews. Still for many hours Rodney in vain endeavoured to break through their line. This he effected in the afternoon, scattering and mastering the hostile squadron, the ships of which were overpowered one after the other. The count de Grasse, in the *Ville de Paris*, made a valiant resistance, combating, until night and the discomfiture of his crew, only three of the survivors of which remained without a wound, compelled him to surrender.

The united forces of France and Spain met with as marked a discomfiture in their attack upon Gibraltar, towards the close of the same year. Floating batteries of a new construction were employed, whilst an army of 20,000 awaited their effect to take the formidable fortress by assault. After a day spent in the hottest cannonade from both sides that ever had, perhaps, been witnessed, the failure of the enterprise became evident during the night, by the floating batteries taking fire. The French historians record with gratitude and admiration the generous conduct of Curtis, who at the risk of his life saved from perishing several hundreds of the enemy.

In the commencement of 1783, a treaty was concluded between Great Britain and the United States of America, whose independence was thus accomplished. Peace was at the same time restored between England and France.[1]

[1 The war added to the French debt 1,400,000,000 livres.]

The latter, in these negotiations, recovered the dignity that she had been obliged to waive when, under Madame de Pompadour, the Treaty of Paris was signed; the advantage and honour seemed on her side. England, besides the restitution of conquests, ceded Senegal and Tobago to France, and Minorca to Spain. The French soldiers in America had shown valour and reaped successes. If De Grasse had yielded after a well-fought struggle, De Suffren in the East supported and redeemed the honour of the French navy. The war, and the treaty which concluded it, would, in either of the former reigns, have been celebrated with popular acclamations, with medals, and panegyric verse; but now the nation was too dissatisfied with its internal state to abate of its censures, or be bribed by even partial victory into quiet and content.[c]

To have added so great a people to the family of nations was a subject of pride to the French of all ranks and conditions. But the sight of their handiwork reminded them painfully of the position still occupied by themselves. They tried to commence a new career of equal laws and constitutional government, when the very traditions of equity or law had died out from every mind. For the succeeding six years efforts were continually made to arrest the onward course of events; but all efforts were too late. Sometimes there was an attempt made by the oligarchs around the throne to reverse the wheels, and retravel the same space that had been traversed since the death of the last king. A persistence in the backward journey might succeed, it was fondly hoped, in landing them in the happy days of Louis XIV and undisputed power; and their measures were as impolitic as their desires were impossible.[b]

Maurepas had filled his office perfectly to his own and the monarch's satisfaction. To him, in influence over the royal mind, succeeded Marie Antoinette. The long estrangement of Louis from his queen had passed away: Maurepas had, from jealousy, contributed to it. The birth of their first child, afterwards the duchess d'Angoulême, in 1778, was at once a sign and a bond of conjugal affection. The dauphin's birth took place in 1781.[c]

SOULAVIE ON THE SECOND EPOCH OF MARIE ANTOINETTE

The birth of a dauphin might have changed the affairs and position of the queen. Had she been wiser and far-seeing, she would have profited from an event which attached her definitely to France, and gave her in a way a new existence. In case of the king's death, Marie Antoinette, as regent, would become queen of the first empire in Europe. This possibility alone made her interesting in the eyes of the French; but she only used this event, which subjugated the king and made her more powerful, as a means of abusing her power, and abusing the weakness of the king to get favours and places from him, from ministries down to exciseships.

The birth of the first dauphin, who died in 1789, was on October 22nd, 1781. The death of M. de Maurepas happened on the 11th of the following month. This event, delivering her from a minister to whom she owed a part of her misfortunes, made her hope that afterwards fewer obstacles would come in her way. It was just the contrary. Like Louis XIV, who was the first to notice the unpleasant truth, the queen in bestowing a place on one man made him an ingrate and twenty others malcontents. She succeeded in getting M. de Ségur into office as marshal of France and wanted to make minister of finance the archbishop of Toulouse, who for a long time had ardently coveted the office of a minister. She would have succeeded, if the

king had not found among the papers of her father that M. de Lomnie was a philosophical atheist. It was by her aid that the virtuous D'Ormesson was sent away. She called and declared herself the protectress of Calonne, whose easy disposition and morals made her hope for the greatest devotion to her interests. She would have liked to displace M. de Vergennes, who had a diplomatic system far removed from the ambitious views of the Viennese court, but here she found the king's affection for the minister unshakable.

Deep political reasons gave rise to the Asiatic splendour which surrounded the reigns of Louis XIV and XV. Magnificence had sustained the variety and pre-eminence of the different ranks. The court of France became each day more deserted, and the centre of intrigue was established little by little in the capital. The royal family was obliged during the week to live at Versailles like an ordinary private family. The nobility cared no longer for that which they had once regarded as a favour — a visit thereunto. Marie Antoinette became tired of seeing the same retinue of servants at Versailles as at Paris, and imagined that the acquisition of St. Cloud, which would take her nearer the capital, would restore the old influence. She forgot that she was transporting her court, already so discredited, into the neighbourhood of a capital whence it had been transferred for strong political and social reasons in the best days of Louis XIV. Also, instead of seeking at St. Cloud the homage and affluence of the nobility, she went openly to the fêtes of the common people, who came there every year to aquatic sports. M. Lenoir alone knew what it cost each year to the police to pay for the banal cry of "*Vive la Reine!*" which he had to oppose to that of the Parisians, who openly said, as they left Paris and all along the road, "We are going to St. Cloud to see the fountains and the Austrian woman," or similar expressions.

A French Infantryman, Time of Louis XV

Thus Marie Antoinette gradually did away with the means devised by ancient monarchs to maintain the reserve and éclat necessary to impress the people. Versailles represented all that was dull to her; she established her pleasures and usual habitation at Trianon, where, despising the ornamental style of Le Nôtre and other celebrated artists in laying out parks in the French style, she went in for the picturesque form of the English garden. The country houses of Vincennes, of Compiègne and Fontainebleau, celebrated in history, and designed from olden times for courtly relaxation, the old forests round them giving an air of mystery, or even a fairy-like appearance, were almost abandoned. The queen only went to St. Cloud, a palace celebrated for the orgies of the house of Orleans and for being the rendezvous of crowds of Parisians; and no one will ever forget that she witnessed the

games as a simple spectator, side by side with the bourgeoisie, who went every Sunday to St. Cloud.

The queen took advantage of all these circumstances to change and simplify our costumes, doing it to the prejudice of our national industry. The magnificence of court robes had formerly been a source of riches; and Lyons, the central silk manufactory, kept alive our southern provinces where cocoons were the chief source of wealth. Every year Lyons bought in Provence and Languedoc fifty millions' worth of silken goods. The French accused the emperor of being jealous of this richness, and accused the queen of having helped her brother in a scheme to destroy the commerce of Lyons. They accused her of trying to effect a revolution in France in habits and fashions, to the profit of the linen manufactures in the Netherlands, which her brother was interested in reviving. There was some truth in this accusation. When the queen accustomed her ladies to dress in white, Brussels grew rich and Lyons lost three-quarters of its trade.

Louis XIV had made all the courts of Europe dependent on Lyons goods. The capitals of all empires and kingdoms, and noblemen of every nationality spent annually in Lyons about 80,000,000 francs, buying superb stuffs, silken damask, and satin brocaded in gold and silver. The new queen's bad taste, and the revolutions she wrought in our fashions and arts, altered the style in all France and Europe (so great was our foreign influence). Thousands of weavers and artisans were thrown out of work and were in misery. Discontent broke out. The Lyons merchants, seeing their commerce vanishing, represented to the king's aunts the necessity of keeping up trade and forbidding the new sorts of goods which had been introduced in France to the detriment of our commercial prosperity.

These ladies received the petition, presented it to the king, and reproached the queen in polished terms of rebuke. She listened with a haughtiness foreign to the French court. Silk clothes — all that beauty of stuff and design, to which artists and women had contributed — were now worn only on high and solemn occasions. Long trains disappeared. A style as of courtesans and prostitutes appeared in the queen's private court, and never after this crowning fault did the old grandeur reappear. "It was impossible to distinguish a duchess from an actress," said Montjoie,[k] the panegyrist of this princess; and moreover, the French looms lost more than a hundred millions annually, and Joseph II gained as much by the exportations from the Low Countries. And when England, following suit, concluded a treaty with us which destroyed our best manufactures, the French spirit awoke in the people, in that class of citizens who are ingenious, active, brave, vigilant, and friends of their native country. They rose against a government which lowered and impoverished the nation to the profit of Austria and England.

To this craze for cambric and linen, succeeded the folly of having amateur theatricals. The king, serious by nature, avoided or was bored by them. But the queen, fond of acting, took parts — not great ones in which there might have been some dignity, but those of soubrettes, servants, and confidants. "Formerly," said Montjoie,[k] "even a plain gentleman would have lost in character if he had acted as a comedian even in his own home." The queen quite upset this wholesome prejudice by her example, and learned and acted rôles in comic opera. This rage spread in society, and manners did not improve therefrom. The queen played her parts awkwardly. She could hardly ignore the fact that she was not doing wisely when she saw how little pleasure her performances gave. "Put in your memoirs," said a lady to me, who had seen her intimately at Versailles and Trianon, "that she has the

manners and talent of a second-rate comedienne." This was a severe criticism, but if her conduct did not deserve it, she gave occasion for hasty judgment. But it is time to speak on this delicate subject.

One may imagine how the queen, having drawn on herself the enmity of the king's aunts, of monsieur, of madame, of madame d'Artois, and of the greater part of the great ladies, has been calumniated for her morals. Posterity, to get at the truth, ought to ignore nineteen-twentieths of the accusations against her; but as the ways of Roman empresses, like those of queens of the Middle Ages, are the mainspring of history, and as those of the French queens have had a powerful influence on state destinies, I will relate some facts that I have learned from those who knew the Old Régime well, and who confirmed them during the Revolution while I was writing these memoirs.

The queen, as long as Louis XV lived, conducted herself with more dignity than when she was queen of France. From that epoch, until the birth of madame,[1] she did nothing to hinder the complaints which were heard with regard to her. Edward, nicknamed *le beau Dillon*, and M. de Coigny passed as her lovers. They went so far as to put the count of Artois on the list. "We made this discovery by accident," said a lady to me, "for the count of Artois put his foot on that of madame de . . . thinking he had put it on that of Marie Antoinette." From 1774 to 1789 the court was a strange mixture. The queen was openly reproached with having the morals credited in history to several empresses.[d]

The Diamond Necklace

All these scandals were to find an echo and one which even added to them though there were enough of them already. The prince of Guéménée, one of the Rohans, made a shameful bankruptcy. A short time after, another Rohan, Louis, archbishop of Strasburg, and a cardinal, a corrupt prelate and courtier, became, through his credulity, the victim of an intrigue which publicly compromised the queen. Ambitious of being made a minister, and desiring to gain the favour of Marie Antoinette, or rather to turn aside the enmity he had incurred, he bought a necklace for her which cost 1,600,000 francs. He permitted himself to be duped by an intriguing woman, the countess de la Motte-Valois, who promised to deliver it in his name. He was overwhelmed with debt, despite his ecclesiastical revenues which amounted to 1,200,000 francs. He could not pay the first instalment and the jewellers applied to the king. Vergennes and Miromesnil advised the hushing up of the affair, but Louis XVI preferred to follow the advice of two intimate friends of the queen, who wished to ruin the cardinal. He ordered De Rohan to be arrested and sent to the Bastille.

The Rohans cried out at this; the public, ignorant of what had happened, believed it an abuse of power and an act of vengeance on the part of Marie Antoinette. The cardinal demanded to be tried by the parliament. The clergy and the pope protested against what seemed to them a violation of ecclesiastical privileges. Notwithstanding this the trial took place. The evidence revealed an incredible series of scandals; the accused had been worked upon by the swindlers into whose power he had fallen through his folly; and these swindlers represented the queen as playing a supposed rôle of venality and love-making. At the end of ten months the attorney-general

[1 That is, her daughter, afterwards the duchess d'Angoulême. The king's eldest daughter, the wife of his eldest brother (Monsieur), or the princess nearest the throne, was so called.]

requested that sentence should be pronounced. The king and the court wished it. The parliament condemned the principal culprits, Madame de la Motte, to be branded and kept in confinement; her husband, who had sold the diamonds of the necklace in England, to confinement; and Villette, who had forged the signature of Marie Antoinette, to banishment,[1] but the cardinal was acquitted by a majority of five votes. The queen was so unpopular that this acquittal was received with public applause. There was a desire at any price to make her appear guilty. Exception was even taken to Louis XVI's action when he exercised an indisputable right in exiling Louis de Rohan to one of his abbeys, while demanding that he should resign the office of grand almoner, and forbidding him to appear at court, a disgrace as necessary as it was merited (1786). The result of this trial was thus a great scandal to the higher clergy, to the court, and finally to the queen, although no one could doubt her innocence.[e]

The queen, in the inconsiderate gaiety of youth, of innocence, and high place, gave those handles to calumny that dissolute hypocrisy would have avoided. Her influence over her husband was not less pernicious because of her innocence; whilst the popular rumours that denied this had the terrible effect of blackening the discontent against royalty into personal odium towards the sovereign and his consort.

To the place of Maurepas in the administration, though not to his influence, succeeded Vergennes: he tried if men of mediocre talents might not manage the routine of finance; moreover, he chose them from the benches of the parliament, in hopes of conciliating that body. Joly de Fleury, and after him D'Ormesson, was placed at the head of the treasury. The government came to a complete stand for want of funds during the ministry of the latter; and talent, or a character for talent, was again sought: it was difficult to find; Turgots and Neckers were rare: in default of such, a man of showy parts and high pretensions was chosen—a clerk, who aped the courtier. Such was Calonne. He improvised a theory by contradicting his predecessors; an obvious mode of being original. As economy had been cried up by Necker and by Turgot, the new minister declared that profusion formed the wealth of a state. He resolved to follow Turgot's plan, the only obvious one indeed, of equalising the taxes, and levying them alike on noblesse and clergy as well as on the commons. In order to effect this, which Turgot had failed in, and Necker had not attempted, Calonne proposed to call an assembly of notables, the chiefs, in fact, of the privileged orders. He hoped to move them, or shame them, or cajole them, to consent to his proposals; and the notables were accordingly summoned to meet in the commencement of the year 1787.

THE ASSEMBLY OF NOTABLES (1787 A.D.)

In February, the assembly of notables was opened at Versailles. Calonne, in a solemn discourse, disclosed his plans; and, to prove the necessity of reform, confessed a deficit of 112,000,000 francs. His plans alone for taxing the privileged orders were sufficiently distasteful to his hearers, especially to the clergy, who claimed and exercised the right of taxing themselves in their own synods. The deficit gave a handle for discontent; and Calonne, in unjustly throwing part of it upon Necker, called forth a triumphant exculpation from that financier, whom he exiled in answer. Hence Necker's party,

[1 Implicated in this scandal was that superlative charlatan, Cagliostro, who was acquitted, but banished.]

including the writers of the day, the ecclesiastics, and the greater portion of the noblesse, were in instant opposition to Calonne, whom they accused of seeking to despoil and humble the higher classes. They called for an account of the revenue and expenditure. After much struggle and reluctance, it was granted. The receipt amounted to 400,000,000 francs, whilst the annual expenditure exceeded that by 150,000,000. Such a contrast with the confidence and profusion of the minister afforded ample ground of censure against him. Calonne, whose only support lay in the count of Artois (afterwards Charles X), whose debts he had paid, and in the Polignacs, was obliged to succumb.

THE FINANCES OF BRIENNE

A new minister was now chosen from the triumphant notables. This was the archbishop of Toulouse, — Étienne Charles de Loménie de Brienne, "as weak a head," says Madame de Staël,[9] "as ever was covered by the peruque of a counsellor of state." He had fought in behalf of privilege, although, in common with the assembly which he led, he affected to be merely actuated by indignation against the profligate Calonne. The notables dispersed, and left Brienne to enjoy the vanity and the difficulties of his pre-eminent station. The archbishop of Toulouse had now to keep his tacit promise of respecting the exemption of the privileged orders from general taxation; and yet, in order to gain the popular voice, he was obliged to affect the contrary policy. His vanity and love of place made him stoop to play so base and dangerous a part. The assent of the notables to Calonne's plans of taxation and reform had no legislative force; but still its moral influence was so great that had Brienne immediately drawn up an edict for a territorial impost, and presented it to the parliament, the legists durst not have refused to sanction it. But Brienne hesitated, and manœuvred to gain time, sending to the parliament edicts establishing stamp duties and abolishing corvées, and bringing forward the vital question of the land tax but in their wake.

By this means the parliament were allowed both leisure and pretext for resistance. In that body there existed much diversity of opinion. The presidents and elders were attached to their own privileges, which they felt were allied to those of noblesse and clergy. The provincial assemblies proposed by Turgot, Necker, and Calonne were odious to them; and the great question of the territorial impost did not please them, since it was evident that its effect would be to raise the crown above all want to its ancient height of superiority. This last result was indeed dreaded on all hands, though avowed by none, and was the principal motive of that discontented and seditious spirit that opposed all reform, as saving the country from anarchy to plunge it into despotism. The parliament was embarrassed by these conflicting views and circumstances. One thing, however, was evident, that both notables and minister had cast off the onus of decreeing the territorial impost, or the odium of rejecting it, upon the parliament: and the parliament now sought to follow their example, in doing neither one nor the other. But how to escape?

There was no way except down a precipice; and they took it. They declared that they had no more right than the notables to sanction laws or taxes; thus contradicting their past pretensions for centuries, and abdicating at once their right to stand in the place of a national assembly. The king being unable to decree new laws or taxes, and the notables and parliament successively avowing their incompetence to aid him, the states-general became the only resource. This fearful name, that men dreaded to utter, was nevertheless uppermost in the thoughts of all. Necessity must have suggested it to the dullest. But it was unheard of, until a pert member, gathering audacity from the impulse of his wit, gave utterance to it in the shape of a pun. "It is not states of expenditure and income that we want," said he, "but states-general." When one thus had the audacity to speak the word, thousands found courage to re-echo it.

This sounded as a thunderclap to the court and to Brienne, who was prepared for the refusal or acquiescence of the parliament, but not for this detested alternative. He was enraged. The refractory body was summoned to a bed of justice at Versailles; and the two edicts of the stamp duty and land tax were forcibly registered, the minister losing sight of his deference towards the higher orders. The parliament returned to its sitting, protested, and declared the registry of the edicts null. Brienne exiled the body to Troyes. Justice was thus suspended; and the government yielded. The parliament was recalled; it gratified Brienne by registering a new loan to meet urgent necessities, and in return the archbishop promised that the states-general should be convoked within five years.

A Captain of Artillery, Reign of Louis XVI

Thus were the cause and high pretensions of the court and higher orders betrayed (if submitting to necessity can be called treason) by the very ministers whom they raised to defend them. They discarded Turgot, and drove away Necker; yet Calonne, their minion, was obliged to adopt the liberal plans of his predecessors, and was in consequence superseded by a chief notable and high churchman. Vain precaution! this champion of the high orders was himself not only driven reluctantly to propose the hated laws and to compel their registry, but he was obliged in addition to capitulate and yield up everything in the important promise of calling an assembly of the nation. The chief maxim of an administration had hitherto been to sail between the two shoals of bankruptcy on one hand and the states-general on the other. Brienne struck the vessel of the state on the latter sand-bank. In more favourable circumstances, with more skilful pilots, it might have righted, and floated into port; but, the wind now menacing, the popular tempest soon broke loose, and the monarchy went to pieces.

Such were the events of the year 1787, in which the Revolution advanced with an awful stride. The high orders retreated before it. Louis XVI reformed his court, and dismissed a crowd of high officers; but the minister, despite his concessions, was still at war with the parliament. In the resistance offered to the bed of justice, the duke of Orleans had shown himself most forward. That prince had placed himself at the head of the violent and

liberal, or what Weber[l] calls the American party. He was exiled in consequence. His friends now stirred in his behalf, and raised discussion as to the legality of *lettres de cachet*. Brienne perceived his blunder in first castigating the parliament and then yielding to them. He resolved to imitate Maupeou, and proceed to extremities. A plan was secretly matured and prepared for dismissing the parliament, and establishing other courts, provincial and metropolitan, in lieu, with a *cour plénière*, or body of peers, magistrates, and notables; in fact, to constitute a high court of appeal. The project was not kept sufficiently close. D'Esprémesnil, a councillor, obtained a copy of it from the printer; and, hurrying to the Palais de Justice, assembled his brethren.

On the morrow, the parliament was to be broken. They imitated the conduct of Charles I's parliament, when the usher was at the door, in voting a declaration. This set forth that the states-general had alone the right of granting taxes; that magistrates were irremovable; that no one should be arrested without immediate trial before his natural judge. On a par with these fundamental laws, they placed the hereditary right of succession in the crown. The minister replied to this manifesto by issuing a warrant to arrest D'Esprémesnil. He took refuge in the parliament. The usher employed, knowing not his person, asked which was he; and the councillors exclaimed that "they were all Esprémesnil." Nevertheless he surrendered. The king, in a bed of justice, compelled the registry of his edict, dissolving the parliament. The bailiwicks [*grands bailliages*] and plenary court [*cour plénière*] was instituted in its stead. The resistance was now general. Collisions took place universally in the provinces betwixt the troops and the people, who supported their ancient magistracy.

The treasury in the meantime grew empty. A loan was impossible. Brienne had recourse to his own order. He summoned a convocation of the clergy, and asked of them a subsidy. To his demands for supply, they gave in answer the universal echo, the states-general; and, as if impatient of ruin, requested the immediate convocation of the assembly. Overcome by this last blow, the minister yielded, and dared to hope from the commons that support to the throne which the noblesse, the parliament, and the clergy had successively and factiously denied. In August, 1788, appeared in consequence an *arrêt* of the council, convoking the states-general in the month of May of the following year.

Brienne hoped to preside over this assembly and direct its motions. "Are you not afraid to hold the states?" asked some one of him. "Sully held them," was the self-sufficient reply. But the archbishop was destined to proceed no further in the emulation of Sully. The treasury was without funds; and the day was at hand for the payment of dividends to the public creditors. The minister proposed paying part in bills. The Parisian *rentiers* were in a fury to find their income thus curtailed.[1] An insurrection was expected; several had lately taken place in the provinces — at Rennes, at Grenoble[2] — and Brienne feared for the consequences. He hurried, in tears, to the royal closet, and besought the interference of the queen to induce Necker to aid and enter office. Necker agreed to supersede Brienne, but refused to take office with him. The archbishop was accordingly sacrificed.

[1 The archbishop was burned in effigy, and many lives were lost.]

[2 "A large assembly of citizens of the three estates gathered at the hôtel-de-ville of Grenoble and decided that the states of Dauphiné, fallen into desuetude for many generations, should convene July 21st, 1788. Up to now, there had been special resistance from corporations and popular uprising; on this day was seen the national sovereignty in action for the first time. This act opened the French Revolution." — MARTIN.[c]]

"If he did not make the fortune of the state," says Thiers,[m] "he at least made his own": he retired enormously rich; and even begged for a cardinal's hat in parting. In addition to the chaos and disorder to which the kingdom was reduced in his administration, his foreign policy, or rather lack of such, entailed disgrace. The popular party of the Dutch, favoured by the French, had rebelled against the stadholder. Prussia marched an army into Holland, despised the feeble menaces of Brienne, and re-established the power of the prince of Orange.[c]

On August 25th, 1788, the king sent for Necker, and for the moment Paris was beside herself with joy. "It was almost a burlesque," says Mallet du Pan[n] "and serves as a thermometer of the distress. In a country of twenty-four million inhabitants, it was necessary to beg aid of a foreigner, a Protestant, a republican, dismissed seven years back, exiled last year, hated by the master, of principles and character diametrically opposed to the court."

MONTYON ON NECKER'S SECOND MINISTRY

When M. Necker returned to the ministry, instead of giving the people laws, he had to give them bread. He found only 500,000 francs in the exchequer. A number of payments were due and could not be made. The greater part of the money to come in was already anticipated and free use had been made of these anticipations. The creation of state promissory notes caused the greatest alarm; all speculation, all business, was suspended and paralysed; commerce was stagnant: state bankruptcy seemed inevitable, and yet was avoided without force, constraint, taxes, or loans, or state promissory notes — those notes so alarming, so ominous! He made no use at all of any of these: they did not even appear. He was provided for all the separate needs for the moment. All the expedients, transfers, bank resources in which M. Necker excelled were set in motion. A number of detailed means were employed, which would have been feeble alone, but were strong when united. It was exceedingly wise not to set any great force at work which would have met with obstacles in the weakened and discredited government, or in the power of people interested in contradicting.

There was no time in the administration of M. Necker when he showed so much courage, wisdom, talent, and sagacity. His well-chosen combinations and the success they obtained bordered on the miraculous. Yet this epoch of his administration is not that which has won the chief praise of his partisans, because men are more touched by and more grateful for good done than for evils averted, even when the service is greater. However sad, however alarming was the state of affairs, there was one bright point which gave M. Necker great satisfaction. He had always desired a convocation of the states-general, foreseeing this to be the only means by which he could carry out the great reforms he projected.

He thought of giving to the third estate [*tiers état*] a number of extraordinary representatives, double that of each of the other estates; this number of representatives would necessarily lead to the increase of suffrage; he presumed the preponderance which would result would be at the disposition of those to whom it was due. He believed he could support this audacious innovation by giving it the appearance of a national desire. But finding himself deprived of the means of authorising by the vote of the nobles such an unusual and irregular design, he took up a plan which was most extraordinary, most audacious and unheard of, and which has

no counterpart in any history of any people. He freely expressed his opinion and gave it a publicity which he thought would second his ambitious views if the members of the third estate heard it as coming from the author of the prerogatives that had been conceded to them. This was an astonishing phenomenon in the administration of France, to see a minister substituting the promulgation of his personal intentions instead of those of the king, which alone ought to be made public. Necker usurped the office of both king and chancellor. He notified the intentions of the king, explained them, and even said in the name of his majesty what his majesty had neither said nor hinted at. He taught the states-general what was the object of their deliberations, what spirit should guide them, and constituted himself preceptor to the nation.

But that which was more surprising, even inconceivable, — that which was more unjustifiable than an irregularity or a usurpation of function, and which no consideration could justify, — was that M. Necker had dared in his speech to exceed and restrict the clauses of a decree of the council which went against his views. According to the decree, an authentic instrument of the king's will, the double representation conferred on the third estate gave it no augmentation of suffrages. Necker in his speech decided in the name of the king that in matters of general interest the third estate should have as many suffrages as representatives. He thought to give power to authorise a contradiction of what had been decreed in the council by an agreement obtained from the king by private effort, and consequently removed from all discussion and contradiction; a subversion alarming and fatal to the only barrier which had been given to kings against the surprises of an imprudent or unfaithful minister; a blow against the only pledge the nation possessed of the wisdom and justice of determinations emanating from the throne.

After a long, stormy, and sterile debate on the form of the deliberations of the states-general, the king declared to them what should henceforth be the state constitution. This constitution should have for its principal object the regulation of finance, which in the eighteenth century had formed the chief pivot on which all social conventions relative to the government had turned; no tax, no loan without the consent of the states-general; fixed times for sitting; and, to assure these sittings, taxation would only be valid from one sitting to another; all taxes to be supported equally by all classes; the states to have the right of assigning funds for each expense and to receive the accounts of same; public expenses to be published every year; in case of imminent danger the king to have a right of raising a temporary loan up to 100,000,000 francs and the command of military forces always to remain with the king.

This new state of things conformed to the plan traced by Necker, save for certain modifications and restrictions which made no essential change, nor hindered its main object. Therefore he ought to have tolerated these modifications. But he considered them as a failing in submission to his ideas. This he would not allow, and instead of following the ordinary route followed by even the firmest of ministers — who, when the king does not see fit to follow his counsel, puts the matter to the vote and retires from the ministry — Necker permitted himself the indiscretion of not appearing at that sitting when the king made known his will. However, he wished after this sitting to give in his resignation. He was retained by the king, sent away some days after, redemanded by the national assembly, and on this demand recalled and re-established in his place.

We have already seen what was for the time his triumph. After his return, as the idol of France, he soon experienced on the part of the national assembly a contradiction which extended to every object, even the least important, even in matters in which his superior knowledge and experience made him the natural guide of the assembly. If he fixed the interest of a loan, and a smaller one than he had proposed was suggested, the loan fell through; but the assembly was not disposed to take his advice, and he became inconsiderable and of an absolute nullity. When in one of his orations he spoke of his virtues, he appeared ridiculous; having ventured to speak of his wife, he was received with roars of laughter; when, hurt by all the contradiction and humiliation, he publicly shed tears, the act was only regarded as showing weakness and want of character.

NECKER

The principal personages of the states had conceived much vaster plans than those of Necker. But they recognised that their financial schemes must extend further than mere bank loans, hitherto the chief mainspring. They could not seek a resource in increased taxation, for that would have made the people discontented, and their favour and support were necessary. The state was discredited, no loans seemed practicable, but they opened two mines of wealth which produced enormous sums — the confiscation of clerical goods and those of French emigrants. They would give as security paper money, with which these goods could be bought, and which should be circulated as current coin. The facility of creating bonds by this paper, the rapacity of those who disposed of them, the falsifications they gave rise to, brought in such immense sums that they were soon clearly in excess of properties mortgaged. Much was lost in bills of exchange, but the more the paper money was discredited so much the more was it circulated, for it became absolutely necessary to get a large sum for state expenses. Necker was reduced to being an inactive spectator of so much disorder, folly, and injustice. Agent of the national assembly, involuntary executant of its decrees, ill-treated by his tyrannous master, overwhelmed with contradiction and humiliation, his health lost by excess of work, by continual anxieties about his private affairs, and sadness arising from his own situation and that of the state, he therefore determined to leave the ministry and France. The announcement of his retirement was received without regret, and his emigration met with neither disagreement nor danger.[p]

CONVOCATION OF THE STATES-GENERAL

The assembly of the estates became the one thought of France. In what form should they assemble? Should the third estate take the same rank as in 1614 when it was so greatly humiliated, or should it on the contrary be

made dominant? Matters had greatly advanced in the course of two centuries. The third estate had become an order deriving consideration from its wealth, learning, activity, and the high functions filled by its chiefs in the government and administration of the country. Respect for the nobility had been greatly shaken, and in 1784 all, even the nobles themselves, had applauded the epigrams spoken on the stage in Beaumarchais's *Figaro:* "Because you are a great lord you think yourself a great genius! You have taken the trouble to be born, that is all." Now in order that the third estate might occupy the place it merited, it would be necessary at least to double the number of its members and establish the vote by head instead of the vote by order. This course was supported by Necker and by all liberal-minded men.[1]

But the nobility resisted; that of Brittany, in particular, showed itself so unbending that at Rennes several sanguinary combats took place between the young bourgeois and the nobles. Necker endeavoured to obtain a solution to the question by means of an assembly of notables which refused to admit any change in the ancient system. Then he determined himself to put an end to a part of the difficulty; a decree of the council which established the double representation, without deciding anything as to the vote by head, summoned the estates to Versailles for the 1st of May, 1789.

It had long been said that the third estate paid with its goods, the nobility with its blood, the clergy with its prayers. Now the clergy of court and salon did little praying, and it was no longer the nobility alone who formed the royal army; but the third estate, faithful to its function in the body politic, continued paying more and more every year. Since its purse was the common treasury it was inevitable that the more prodigal of money the monarchy became the more it would bring itself into dependence on the bourgeoisie, and that a moment would arrive when the latter, weary of paying, would demand a reckoning. That day is called the Revolution of 1789.

In a celebrated pamphlet the abbé Sieyès examined the questions which all were then asking themselves, and said, "What is the third estate? — What has it been? — Nothing. — What ought it to be? — Everything." Thus to the phrase of Louis XIV, "I am the state" (*L'État, c'est moi*), Sieyès answered: "We are the state" (*L'État, c'est nous*). Indeed he reckoned the number of nobles of all ages and either sex at less than 110,000, and the clergy were not more numerous.

The court, especially the queen, the count of Artois, the princes of Condé and Conti, and the Polignacs would have liked the states-general to occupy themselves solely with matters connected with the finances, and would have desired that the deficit once made up and the debts paid the deputies should be sent back to their homes. But political reforms were the best pre-

[1 The "doubling" (*doublement*) of the third estate already existed in the states of Languedoc. As a rule the kings had opposed aristocratic influence in the provincial estates by looking for support to the third. At the states-general of Orleans of 1560, there were 393 deputies, of which 98 were from the clergy, 76 from the nobility, and 219 from the third estate; in 1576 at the states of Blois there were 329 deputies, 134 of them from the clergy, 75 from the nobility, 150 from the third estate; in 1588 at the second states of Blois, 505 deputies, of which 134 were from the clergy, 180 from the nobility, and 191 from the third estate. At the estates of the League there were only about 138 deputies, most of them from the third estate; and finally in 1614, at the estates of Paris, there were 464 deputies, 140 from the clergy, 132 from the nobility, and 192 from the third estate. In the four provincial assemblies planned or instituted by Necker in Berri, Upper Guienne, Dauphiné, and the Bourbonnais, the deputies of the third estate had half the votes. The first two of these assemblies remained in existence till 1789; twenty-two others were instituted in 1787 by Calonne, still according to the same principle.]

caution to take against the return of the deficit. The nation understood this and was resolved that they should be undertaken.

With the immense developments of industry, trade, science, public spirit, and personal wealth, France now possessed interests too complex and needs too numerous to allow of her delivering herself to the omnipotence of a single man, without any guarantee against the unhappy chances of royal births or the frivolity of incompetent ministers. The nation was ripe for the time when it would attend to its own affairs, and break through the half-torn wrapping which still encumbered its movements. Unfortunately peoples never break with their past save by cruel wrenches.

At the news of the convocation of the states-general the agitation already existing in France was redoubled. Societies, or "clubs" as they were called in imitation of the English, were formed on every side — among others the Breton club which gave rise to the ill-omened society of Jacobins. These associations were not all peaceable, and brought to light divisions which existed even in the midst of the privileged orders. The clergy had its democracy in the country curés; that of the nobility consisted of the small gentry. The latter were, in general, opposed to the Revolution and when they saw that some of the great lords, as La Fayette, La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, the counts of Montmorency and of Lally-Tollendal, the viscount de Noailles and others, favoured reform, they said proudly, "They are bartering away more of our rights." In Brittany the nobles and bishops preferred to appoint no deputies at all rather than admit a double representation of the third estate. The Breton curés, however, made a schism and thus commenced the division of the clergy.

In Provence the nobles protested against the decision of the king's council. An illustrious apostate, the count of Mirabeau, violently attacked their protest. Repulsed by the nobles who did not wish him to hold his seat among them, he hurled the following threatening words at them: "In every country, in every age, the aristocrats have mercilessly persecuted the friends of the people, and if by any chance such a friend had gone forth out of their own number, they have attacked him with particular violence, eager to inspire terror by the choice of their victim. Thus the last of the Gracchi perished at the hands of the patricians, but in dying he threw dust towards heaven, calling on the avenging gods to witness his death, and from this dust was born Marius — Marius, less great for having exterminated the Cimbri than for having overcome the aristocracy of the nobles in Rome." He went through the whole province, greeted by a populace dazzled by the first bursts of that eloquence which was destined to fill a still greater theatre. By his influence he quieted the disturbances which had broken out at Aix and Marseilles, where he was received with the noise of cannon and the sound of bells. His youth had been full of disorder, but he had suffered much from the unjust severity of his father and of the government, the latter having issued seventeen *lettres de cachet* against him. He had been imprisoned on the island of Ré, then in the château d'If, in the fortress of Joux, at Vincennes, and been condemned to death for an abduction. At the age of twenty he had written an *Essai sur le despotisme* with the following epigraph from Tacitus: *Dedimus profecto grande patientiæ documentum.* Later he obtained a living by his pen. His was a soiled name, but a superior spirit. His voice was to become the voice of the Revolution.

The following are the demands which were contested by no one and were found in nearly all the memorials (or *cahiers*) to the king. (1) Regarding the political system: sovereign power emanates from the people and can be

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[1789 A.D.]

exercised only by the joint agreement of the national representatives and the hereditary chief of the state; necessity of giving a constitution to France; exclusive right of the states-general to make laws (which should obtain royal sanction before being executed), to control the public expenses, to impose taxes; abolition of the financial immunity and personal privileges of the clergy and nobility; suppression of the last remnants of bondage; eligibility of all citizens to public office; responsibility of the agents of executive authority. (2) For the moral system: freedom of religion and of the press; education by the state of poor and abandoned children. (3) For the judicial system: unity of legislation and jurisprudence; suppression of exceptional jurisdiction; publicity of debates; mitigation of the penal laws; reform of the laws of procedure. (4) For the administrative system: creation of provincial assemblies to control the administration of the royal deputies; unity of weights and measures; new division of the kingdom according to population and revenue. (5) In the economic system: freedom of industry; suppression of interior custom-houses; replacement of the various taxes by a tax on land and movable property, which was to affect fruits but never capital.

These demands, which comprised the whole Revolution, and characterised its labours at the start, show that the nation which was capable of formulating them deserved to obtain them.[1] They have been called by some "the Principles of '89." Napoleon named them more justly "the Truths of the Revolution."

On the 2nd of May all the deputies assembled at Versailles were presented to the king. On the 4th they marched in solemn procession to the church of St. Louis. The bishop of Nancy concluded his sermon on that day with these words: "Sire, the people over which you reign have given unequivocal proofs of patience. It is a people of martyrs, who seem to have been kept alive only that they might suffer the longer." All Paris was at Versailles. In the midst of an immense crowd the cortège appeared, the third estate at the head, as it was customary for the least important personages to lead. They were showered with applause. The nobles in their embroidered clothes passed amidst silence, except in the case of a few popular men who were applauded; the same silence greeted the clergy, who came next. Enthusiasm revived only for the king, who closed the procession.

The 5th of May the estates met in the *Salle des Menus* which was designated by the name of Hall of the Three Orders. The king was on the throne surrounded by the princes of the blood; on the steps was the court. The remainder of the hall was occupied by the three orders: at the right of the throne sat the clergy, counting 290 members, of whom 48 were archbishops or bishops, 35 abbots or canons, 204 curés and 3 monks; at the left were the nobles comprising 269 members, to wit: 1 prince of the blood, the duke of Orleans, 240 noblemen, and 28 magistrates of the superior courts; finally in the rear, on lower benches, was placed the third estate composed of 584 members, of whom 12 were noblemen, 2 priests, 18 mayors, 162 magistrates of the *bailliage* or *sénéschaussée*, 212 advocates, 16 physicians, 162 merchants or owners and cultivators of land.[2]

[1] We can trace the national history by comparing in connection with this, the demands made by the estates in 1484, 1560, 1561, 1576, 1588, 1614, and it will be seen that the desire to avoid a revolution by instituting reforms was very old in France. When, in 1781, Calonne became a reformer, he remembered these repeated demands; in stating the reasons for one of his projects, he said: "It is a response to the estates of 1614."

[2 Other estimates are: Clergy, 308; nobles, 285; third estate, 621, of whom only 10 were of the lower classes.]

[1789 A.D.]

The king in a few well-chosen words expressed his hopes for the happiness of the nation, invited the estates to work towards that end, recommending to their attention the financial problem especially, and urging them to remedy the evils without being carried away by that exaggerated desire for innovation "which has taken hold of people's minds." Barentin, keeper of the seals, dilated upon the royal speech, seeming to reduce the functions of the estates to a vote on the taxes, to a discussion of a law against the press, and to a reform of the civil and criminal legislation. The floor was then given to Necker, general controller of the finances, and he tired everyone by the length of his discourse. Two passages in it, however, excited lively attention—that in which he admitted an annual deficit of 56,000,000 francs and of 260,000,000 in anticipation, and the one in which he declared that the king asked the estates to help him establish the prosperity of the kingdom on firm foundations. "Look for them," he said, "point them out to your sovereign, and you will find on his part the most generous assistance." Thus there was anarchy in the council itself. The keeper of the seals, the organ of the court, considered the present crisis to be a financial, rather than a political and social one, and the controller of the finances seemed to give full range to the states-general.

To establish the political and social unity of the nation by equality before the law and to guarantee it by liberty—this in two words was the whole spirit of 1789. Three societies were in existence; it was necessary that there should be but one. In the discussion raised in connection with the first question to be decided, the examination of the powers of the deputies, the third estate declared in favour of making this examination jointly, the clergy and nobility wished each order to examine the power of its members separately. The method of deliberation which would be adopted in other cases, and the vote by estates or by individuals depended upon the way in which they decided on this point. Were the vote to be by estates, the majority was assured to the clergy and nobility; were it to be by individuals, the third estate would have the largest number of votes, since it outnumbered the other estates by a majority of 584 to 561.

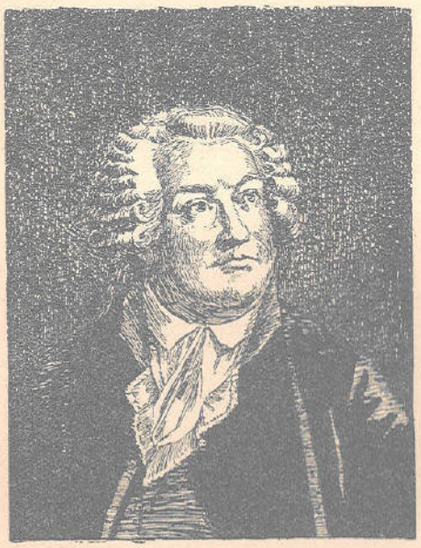
During five weeks the deputies of the third estate, who controlled the common hall, employed every means to get the first two orders to join in the sittings; they invited the clergy "in the name of God, in the name of peace, and in the name of public interest." The clergy was in a grievous position; its doctrines drew it one way, its interests another. As a privileged body it was hostile to the Revolution; as an exponent of the Gospels, it favoured it. Those of its members who profited least from its privileges led the defection. The 13th of June three curés from Poitou came to take their place among the third estate; in the days following, their example was followed by many others. Finally on the 17th of June, on the motion of abbé Sieyès, the commons constituted themselves into the national assembly, considering that "this assembly is already composed of deputies sent by at least 96 hundredths of the nation and that such a number of deputies cannot remain inactive on account of the absence of deputies from a few bailiwicks or of some classes of citizens." Three weeks afterwards, in order better to define its position, it added the word "constituent" to its title (July 9th).

This declaration, which opened the Revolution, threw terror into the court and into the ranks of the first two orders. Nevertheless the clergy, in spite of brilliant efforts on the part of the abbé Maury, decided in favour of attending the sittings, by a small majority caused by the curés (June 19th). The court, the more incensed, urged the king to adopt violent measures.[2]

Louis Blanc's Picture of the Assembly

The old feudal system had crumbled into dust. The national assembly became a constituent assembly [*assemblée constituante*]. It remained to be seen on what basis the new society would be raised. The assembly itself was divided. On the right-hand benches sat, in the pride of a rapidly passing splendour, archbishops, bishops, marquises, and barons, with a few deserters from the *tiers-état*. It is hardly possible that these phantoms of the past believed in the Revolution.

They spent their force in fanning with bravado and jest the last sparks of the old court spirit. Some, who professed to be thinkers, rejoiced greatly at the rapid progress of revolutionary feeling, believing that such rapidity would speedily insure its destruction. Others, younger, swore by their sword and the foreigner that the nobility would never give in, that they would march to their doom with firm eye and unlowered head, a smile of contempt on their lips; march triumphantly towards death, led by Cazalès and the abbé Maury — two great powers of the past — soldier and priest — the soldier a man of eloquent sensibility, whose vehemence was only an exaggeration of his tenderness; the priest a man of cold calculation, "on whose face," says Carlyle,[8] "were depicted all the cardinal sins," and who, more than anyone, provoked the gross apostrophe which came threateningly from the highest tribune: "Gentlemen of the clergy, you are being shaved. If you don't keep still you will be cut."



MIRABEAU

The centre of the assembly was occupied by a mass of men who had gained the sobriquet of Stick-in-the-mud or Bog-folk. Indecision characterised this party. They had for mouthpiece, Lally-Tollendal; for agent, Malouet; and, for real director, Mounier. Mounier, the resolute general of a changeable army, had a soul above fear, intelligence without audacity, and brought a tireless energy to strengthen the timid opinions of others.

The popular party sat on the left. There were found persons each famous in different ways: the duke of Orleans, head of a party to which one doubts whether he really belonged; La Fayette, entirely wrapped up in courting favour; Duport, whom deep meditation and study had prematurely aged; Barnave, elegant and frivolous; Lameth, a type of courtier who sought popularity only to gain honours, and whose misplaced ambition sought through public office a place in the ministry. It is said of these last three that "Duport thought, Barnave talked, and Lameth acted." But all agreed that the real thinker of the popular party was the abbé Sieyès. Much was expected of this grave personage who spoke so little and yet to such purpose. His thoughtful look, his keen eye, the light shed by his brief sentences on his method and aims, made him considered superior to any. One could

not help admiring his firm mouth, or crediting him with wonderful power merely from his ways. He had serious reserve too, a reserve which might be interpreted into a wise contempt or too great modesty.

It was not for him, however, to lead the Revolution. Robespierre was there! Not that the future ascendency of Robespierre was then guessed at. Indeed the Arras advocate was frequently an object of ridicule in the eyes of those gentlemen who adopted the Greek rôle with languid ease and wit. He was not yet transformed by the revolutionary spirit. His speech was awkward and hesitating. His appearances on the tribune which later on made men tremble now provoked only smiles. Nothing in the man's outward appearance indicated his real power. Yet he alone, in each debate, sifted each question thoroughly. Alone in the midst of men tossed hither and thither by contrary opinions, he went straight forward fearlessly, unhesitatingly, with no regard for what others thought of him, his eyes fixed on the future. But those around him did not comprehend this man. His passion for ruling was of the head rather than the heart. With a keen intellect he had firm beliefs, but was as cold as steel. His convictions were unshakable but melancholy. No one guessed the power he possessed and only the Revolution revealed it. Even when he had sometimes given utterance to his deep thoughts in inflexible formulas, only insulting laughter arose from every part of the hall. Yet, in listening to his stubborn argument, in running counter to his unbendable faith, in wondering what meant the keen gaze of his curious blue eyes, in looking at that face whose green tinge often resembled that of the sea, many had a confused presentiment that the man was born to be heard. "This man," said Mirabeau once in an excess of involuntary emotion, "will do something great; he believes in his own words."

There was also in the assembly a fourth party of which the elements changed every hour, who acted on the impulse or inspiration of the moment; which by turns made itself accepted, admired, feared, despised, or compelled submission. This party was one man alone, and that man Mirabeau.

But the assembly taken in its entity — what was it? First, it must be remembered that three orders composed it. The clergy alone had 308 representatives; the nobility sent 266 *gentilshommes* and 19 magistrates; also there were 160 parliamentarians of different degrees. Fifteen *gentilshommes* and four priests were included in the third estate. It would indeed have been wonderful if an assembly so formed had not been subject to disturbance, internal strife, and occasional downfalls. The assembly had to control a tempest which threatened to burst the walls of the room, a tempest of which it hardly grasped the tremendous force. It is true that a certain unity ruled among the divisions and contrary opinions. In the midst of passions and hostile interests certain leading tendencies stood out. But what were these tendencies? Those which the philosophy of the eighteenth century had begotten, stopping at Montesquieu and not going beyond Voltaire; originating with the majority, the third estate, that is, the phalanx of merchants, writers, advocates, sceptical *gentilshommes*, discontented priests, who trembled at having to yield to popular opinion the place they themselves had so largely occupied in the fray. There are parvenues in power no less than in riches, and the characteristic vices of exclusiveness, injustice, and pride exist no less in the middle class than in the upper. On the débris of feudal power in decay, what the majority of the constituents really considered themselves called upon to found was the power of the middle classes and nothing else.

[1789 A.D.]

But the constituent assembly is shown as furnishing, above and beyond its chosen work, the stamp of an often brilliant career. Have we not already seen signs of it sufficient to command respect? Its oath of the *Jeu de Paume* [oath of the tennis court], its serenity among bared swords, its strong, inflexible will in the drama of its conquered unity, its intrepid deliberations with the dragons raised by the court on one side and a people pulling down the Bastille on the other. All that bore an indelible seal; all that was worthy of the new era then opening.

It was because the people were there and fought with the assembly. Behind that third estate, that grew weaker every time it consulted its own interests alone, the great and incomparable Revolution was working, urging it forward, animating and enveloping it with its fiery breath. If it paused, a voice, a startling voice, a voice one-toned though formed, like ocean roaring, of countless murmuring waves, cried: "Advance yet and always!" If the members drooped discouraged, a thunder-clap awakened them. This explains the double character that one notices in the acts of this constituent assembly. It shut itself in the narrow path of duty, and rose occasionally to sublime heights. It made a perishable constitution and proclaimed immortal truths, because it was upheld by two distinct forces, coming from itself and from the people.

These facts are undeniable. Those modern historians who have reproached the assembly with being completely subservient to the Palais Royal and its wire-pullers have missed the mark entirely. Not only did the national assembly resist street clamours, but came, as we shall see, to do its duty under the domination of the false idea that it was the nation. This much is true. It experienced in many circumstances a mysterious pressure unaccountable to itself. This is also true that the chief mainspring of action in deceiving its egotism of caste was a passion, then new to France, of popularity. In reality, the assembly feared the threats though it sought the praise of the Palais Royal. Bearing this in mind one can follow its actions more clearly.

It was general, moreover — this rivalry in seeking public applause. Each century has idols that it presents for human worship. Liberty and equality were the divinities of the day, though as yet veiled and only half comprehended. One had to offer incense, even at a distance, or be deemed behind the times. So it resulted that many supported the Revolution to gain public favour, a favour almost indispensable to a successful career, even an empty one. What said opinion in the faubourgs? What did the newsmongers think? Thus the spirit of flattery descended gradually from the high spheres it had lately inhabited. Sovereignty displaced, had, in its turn, displaced court flatterers. Now the people had for flatterers those who had once insolently deemed themselves the masters. They were avenged. It is a calumny to depreciate the revolutionary force because it influenced frivolous passions and cowardly thoughts; because innumerable impurities are in the wide bosom of the ocean is it less imposing? Because millions of individuals are represented in the work of humanity, is it less majestic? When truth is fiery, passionate, the story of her triumph is not dimmed by the baseness of those who serve her. Men are insignificant. Man is great.[t]

CHAPTER VI

THE FALL OF THE BASTILLE AND OF THE OLD RÉGIME

[1789 A.D.]

If Germany was the cradle of reform, England was its citadel; but
France was the country of revolution and remained its hearthstone.
She proclaimed all its principles and suffered all its excesses.
— PRÉVOST PARADOL.[y]

A GENERAL anxiety seemed to possess everyone, a vague desire for change. Hitherto the Frenchman had been under a vigilant and severe police system, which controlled his movements, spied out his very thoughts. He had been a stranger to political combinations; had not even primitive ideas on the rights of a nation or a king, even of different classes of citizens, and followed errors because they seemed more gigantic and imposing. He abandoned himself to intemperance in ideas and words which might almost make one believe that this people, suddenly emerging from long enchantment, had just recovered the faculty of speaking and thinking. It was in the cafés of the Palais Royal that this new development of the national character first showed itself. A curiosity to hear and tell everything led crowds to these places. One would present himself armed with a constitution which he assured everyone with confident gaiety ought to be the subject of the states-general; another emphatically declaimed the same thing with variations. One ran down the ministers, nobles, and priests, and moulded opinions to his own will, whilst a fourth climbed on to a table and argued concerning the great question of personal representation, proposing chimerical plans for the administration. Each had his audience to approve or blame.

One event, to which not enough attention was paid, had caused well-founded alarm to people who, reflecting on this political effervescence, could not but be uneasy at the general restlessness. On the 27th of April five or six thousand men and women, many of them working people, and excited by leaders who kept themselves in the background, had gone to a man named Réveillon, a rich papermaker in the faubourg St. Antoine. They cried out that he was the people's enemy, that he wished to make them die of hunger; that he had said to the primary assembly in his district it was quite enough if a workman gained fifteen sous a day; they intended, they

added, to kill Réveillon, his wife, and his children. There were races that day at Charenton, a fact known and taken advantage of. The people attacked the house, burned his stores, broke the glasses, pictures, sofas, cupboards, secretaries, carried off money and bank-notes. They staved in casks and got drunk on wine, brandy, and liquors. There were some who drank whole bottles of absinthe and were found dead next day in the cellars.

Another set stopped everyone returning from the races at the St. Antoine gate, asking them if they were for the nobility or the third estate. They insulted those who declared themselves nobles, made their wives get out of their carriages and cry, "*Vive le Tiers État!*" The duke and duchess of Orleans were alone exempted from this humiliation. The people greeted them with applause, repeating with enthusiasm, "*Vive Monseigneur et Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans!*"

A chain of circumstances had made this prince the idol of the people and the leader of a party composed of nobles discontented with the court; of philosophers desirous of all sorts of goods and honours, who were fretted by their inferior position — adventurers, insolvent men, who all, after the convocation of the states-general and the rapid march of public opinion, were open to any change or hope. The duke, aged by a sensual life, by an avarice which would have been bad enough in a private person but was shameful and degrading in a prince, had all the vices which nourish crime and none of those brilliant qualities which make men illustrious in the eyes of posterity. It was necessary to animate this moral corpse, to give it a will. They showed him supreme power under the name of "lieutenant-general of the kingdom," with all the public treasure at his disposal, and, in a future that would surely be his, the crown for his children and he perhaps himself the beginner of a new dynasty.

A voyage in England, relations with the prince of Wales and opposition leaders, had made him suspected at court. They profited by this disfavour to make him more popular with the people, always ready to judge favourably of those who opposed the dominant authority.[b]

It will perhaps save no little confusion in the chronicle of confusion that follows if we detach here for a moment this duke of Orleans and tell his story in completeness, describing his end, and relating the story of his family, which has played so important a part in France, yet one that has been so ill understood abroad.[a]

THE DUKE OF ORLEANS AND THE REVOLUTION

The son of the regent, Louis (1703–1752), who succeeded him as duke of Orleans, played no part in politics, though his name frequently occurs in the social history of the time. His son, Louis Philippe (1725–1785), was equally adverse to politics; his great delight was the theatre, and his place is rather in the history of the Paris green-rooms than in the history of France. But to Louis Philippe Joseph (1747–1793), son of the preceding, a more adventurous life was allotted, and his part in the history of the French Revolution is one of the most difficult problems to solve of that exciting period. In 1769 he married Louise, the only daughter and heiress of the duke of Penthièvre, grand admiral of France, and the richest heiress of the time. Her wealth made it certain that he would be the richest man in France, and he determined to play a part equal to that of his great-grandfather, the regent, whom he resembled in character and debauchery. As duke of Chartres he opposed the plans of Maupeou in 1771, and was promptly exiled to his country estate of Villers-Cotterets (Aisne).

When Louis XVI came to the throne in 1774 Chartres still found himself looked on coldly at court. Marie Antoinette hated him, and envied him for his wealth, wit, and freedom from etiquette, and he was not slow to return her hatred with scorn. In 1778 he served in the squadron of D'Orvilliers, and was present in the naval battle of Ushant. He hoped to see further service, but the queen was opposed to this, and he was removed from the navy, and given the honorary post of colonel-general of hussars. He then abandoned himself to pleasure; he often visited London, and became an intimate friend of the prince of Wales (afterwards George IV); he brought to Paris the "anglomania," as it was called, and made jockeys as fashionable as they were in England. He also made himself very popular in Paris by his large gifts to the poor in time of famine, and by throwing open the gardens of the Palais Royal to the people.

Before the meeting of the notables in 1787 he had succeeded his father as duke of Orleans, and showed his liberal ideas, which were largely learned in England, so boldly that he was believed to be aiming at becoming constitutional king of France. In November he again showed his liberalism in the *lit de justice*, which Brienne had made the king hold, and was again exiled to Villers-Cotterets. The approaching convocation of the states-general made his friends very active on his behalf; he circulated in every *bailliage* the pamphlets which Sieyès had drawn up at his request, and was elected in three — by the noblesse of Paris, Villers-Cotterets, and Crépy-en-Valois. In the estate of the nobility he headed the liberal minority under the guidance of Adrien Duport, and led the minority of forty-seven noblemen who seceded from their own estate (June, 1789) and joined the third estate.

Louis XVI

The part he played during the summer of 1789 is one of the most debated points in the history of the Revolution. The court accused him of being at the bottom of every popular movement, and saw the "gold of Orleans" as the cause of the Réveillon riot and the taking of the Bastille, as the republicans later saw the "gold of Pitt" in every germ of opposition to themselves. There can be no doubt that he hated the queen, and bitterly resented his long court disgrace, and also that he sincerely wished for a thorough reform of the government and the establishment of some such constitution as that of England; and no doubt such friends as Adrien Duport and Choderlos de Laclos, for their own reasons, wished to see him king of France. The best testimony for the behaviour of Orleans during this summer is the testimony of an English lady, Mrs. Grace Dalrymple Elliott, who shared his heart with Comtesse de Buffon, and from which it is absolutely certain that at the time

of the riot of the 12th of July he was on a fishing excursion, and was rudely treated by the king on the next day when going to offer him his services.

He indeed became so disgusted with the false position of a pretender to the crown, into which he was being forced, that he wished to go to America, but, as Comtesse de Buffon would not go with him, he decided to remain in Paris. He was again accused, unjustly, of having caused the march of the women to Versailles on October 5th. La Fayette, jealous of his popularity, persuaded the king to send the duke to England on a mission, and thus get him out of France, and he accordingly remained in England from October, 1789, to July, 1790. On July 7th he took his seat in the assembly, and on October 2nd both he and Mirabeau were declared by the assembly entirely free of any complicity in the events of October. He now tried to keep himself as much out of the political world as possible, but in vain, for the court would suspect him, and his friends would talk about his being king. The best proof of his not being ambitious of such a doubtful piece of preferment is that he made no attempt to get himself made king, regent, or lieutenant-general of the kingdom at the time of the flight to Varennes in June, 1791. He, on the contrary, again tried to make his peace with the court in January, 1792, but he was so insulted that he was not encouraged to sacrifice himself for the sake of the king and queen, who persisted in remembering all old enmities in their time of trouble. In the summer of 1792 he was present for a short time with the army of the north, with his two sons, the duke of Chartres and the duke of Montpensier, but had returned to Paris before August 10th.

After that day he underwent great personal risk in saving fugitives; in particular, at the request of Mrs. Elliott, he saved the life of the count of Champcenetz, the governor of the Tuileries, who was his personal enemy. It was impossible for him to recede, and, after accepting the title of Citoyen Égalité, conferred on him by the commune of Paris, he was elected twentieth and last deputy for Paris to the convention. In that body he sat as quietly as he had done in the national assembly, but on the occasion of the king's trial he had to speak, and then only to give his vote for the death of Louis. His compliance did not save him from suspicion, which was especially aroused by the friendship of his eldest son, the duke of Chartres, with Dumouriez; and when the news of the desertion of Chartres with Dumouriez became known at Paris, all the Bourbons left in France, including Égalité, were ordered to be arrested on April 5th (1793).

In prison he remained till the month of October, when the Reign of Terror began. He was naturally the very sort of victim wanted, and he was decreed "of accusation" on October 3rd. He was tried on November 6th and was guillotined on the same day, with a smile upon his lips and without any appearance of fear.

No man ever was more blamed than Orleans during the Revolution, but the faults of ambition and intrigue were his friends', not his; it was his friends who wished him to be on the throne. Personally he possessed the charming manners of a polished grand seigneur: debauched and cynical, but never rude or cruel; full of gentle consideration for all about him but selfish in his pursuit of pleasure, he has had to bear a heavy load of blame, but it is ridiculous to describe the idle and courteous voluptuary as being a dark and designing scoundrel, capable of murder if it would serve his ambition. The execution of Philippe Égalité made the friend of Dumouriez, who was living in exile, duke of Orleans. Louis Philippe (1773–1850) was known as duke of Orleans throughout his long emigration, and under the Restoration; and as duke of Orleans he was called upon to become king of the French in 1830. His eldest son, Ferdinand Louis Philippe Charles Henri (1810–1842), at once took the title of duke of Orleans.[e]

THE KING'S RESISTANCE

The crisis was calculated to cement the reconciliation of the court and the aristocracy. The danger was equal for both. The parliament offered to render the states unnecessary, by undertaking to sanction all the taxes. The king was surrounded by the princes and the queen; the emergency was too great for his weakness, and he was ultimately drawn to Marly, in order that a vigorous measure might be wrung from him.

The minister Necker, attached to the popular cause, proposed that the monarch should hold a royal sitting, and ordain the junction of the orders, but only for measures of general interest; that he should assume to himself the sanction of all the resolutions passed by the states-general; that he should disallow beforehand every establishment contrary to a limited monarchy, such as that of a single assembly; and that he should promise the abolition of privileges, the equal admission of all Frenchmen to civil and military offices, etc. The council had followed the king to Marly. There the plan of Necker, at first approved of, was again brought under discussion. His plan was completely altered, and the royal sitting was fixed for the 22nd of June.

It was only the 20th of the month, and the hall of the states was already closed, under the pretence of preparations being in progress for the presence of the king. These preparations might have been easily made in half a day; but the clergy had resolved the day before to join the commons, and it was determined to prevent the junction. An order of the king accordingly suspended the sittings until the 22nd. Bailly, deeming himself obliged to obey the assembly, which on Friday, the 19th, had adjourned to Saturday, the 20th, proceeded to the door of the hall. Some of the French guards were gathered around it, with orders not to admit any entrance. The officer on duty received Bailly with respect, and permitted him to advance into a court to record a protestation. Some young and ardent deputies attempted to force the guard; Bailly ran to the spot, appeased their fiery spirit, and led them away with him, in order that they might not compromise the generous officer who executed his orders with so much moderation. The members rushed tumultuously together, and persisted in holding a meeting. Some spoke of assembling under the very windows of the king; others proposed the hall of the tennis court [*jeu de paume*]. They immediately proceeded thither, and the proprietor joyfully granted the use of it.

This hall was spacious, but its walls were dark and bare, and there were no seats. A chair was offered to the president, who refused it, preferring to remain on his legs with the general body. A bench served as a desk; two deputies were placed at the door as a guard, but were soon relieved by the attendants of the place, who came to offer their services. The people flocked in crowds, and the debates commenced. Extreme measures began to suggest themselves to the heated imaginations. It was proposed to proceed to Paris; this opinion, hailed with warmth, was eagerly discussed, and a motion was even made to march there in a body, and on foot. Bailly was fearful of the outrages that the assembly might experience on the road, and apprehensive likewise of originating a schism; therefore he opposed the project.

Thereupon Mounier moved that the deputies bind themselves by oath not to separate before the establishment of a constitution. This motion was received with enthusiasm, and the form of the oath was instantly drawn up. Bailly solicited the honour of swearing first, and read the formula, thus couched: "You take a solemn oath never to separate, to assemble wherever circumstances may require, until the constitution of the kingdom shall be established and confirmed upon solid foundations." This formula, pronounced in a loud and distinct tone, was heard beyond the walls of the building. Immediately all mouths uttered the oath, all arms were stretched towards Bailly, who, erect and stern, received this solemn engagement to secure by laws the exercise of national rights.

The whole body afterwards raised cries of "Long live the assembly! Long live the king!" as if to prove that it claimed the recovery of what was due to the nation, without anger or hatred, but from a sense of duty. The deputies subsequently proceeded to sign the declaration which they had just made by word of mouth. One alone, Martin d'Auch, added to his name the title of "opposer." Considerable tumult ensued around him. Bailly, in order to be heard, mounted on a table, addressed the deputy in a tone of moderation, and represented to him that he had an undoubted right to refuse his signature, but none to record his opposition. The deputy was obstinate, and the assembly, from respect for freedom of opinion, allowed the phrase, and let it remain on the minutes.

This new act of energy struck terror into the nobles, who the next day carried their sorrows to the foot of the throne, expressed their contrition in some degree for the restrictions wherewith they had shackled the royal plan of conciliation, and craved the king's assistance. The minority of the nobility protested against this step, alleging most reasonably that it was the height of folly to ask the royal intervention after having so indiscreetly spurned it. This minority, too little attended to by its colleagues, was composed of forty-seven members, amongst whom were some military men and enlightened magistrates. It numbered the duke de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, the faithful friend of his king and of liberty; the duke de la Rochefoucauld, distinguished for unshaken virtue and an accomplished mind; Lally-Tollendal, already celebrated by reason of the misfortunes of his father, and his eloquent protestations; Clermont-Tonnerre, remarkable for his oratorical talent; the brothers Lameth, young colonels, known for their spirit and valour; Duport, already mentioned for his comprehensive intellect and the firmness of his character; and lastly, the marquis de la Fayette, the defender of American liberty, who united to French vivacity the resolution and simplicity of Washington.

Intrigue paralysed all the energies of the court. The sitting, fixed originally for Monday the 22nd, was postponed till the 23rd. Petty expedients, the ordinary resource of weak authority, were resorted to for the purpose of preventing the assembly meeting on the 22nd. The princes caused the tennis court to be retained, in order to play on it that morning. The assembly proceeded to the church of St. Louis, where it received the majority of the clergy, at whose head appeared the archbishop of Vienne. This junction, effected with imposing dignity, excited the liveliest emotions of joy. The clergy announced that they came there to submit to the common verification.

The next day, the 23rd, was fixed for the royal sitting. The deputies of the commons were appointed to enter the hall by a side door, apart from the entrance reserved for the nobility and clergy. With the exception of violence, every species of indignity was heaped upon them. Exposed to a

heavy fall of rain, they waited patiently for a long time; the president, compelled to knock at this door, which was kept closed, had to repeat his knocks several times, and the only reply he obtained was that the time had not arrived for opening it. The deputies were about to retire in disgust, when Bailly gave another summons: at length the door was opened, the deputies entered and found the two orders in possession of their seats, which they had secured by the precaution of forestalling them. The sitting was not like that of the 5th of May, at once majestic and affecting by a certain effusion of feelings and hopes. A numerous guard and a mournful stillness distinguished it from that first solemnity. The deputies of the commons had resolved to observe a profound silence.

The king pronounced a harangue, and betrayed the influence that had worked upon him, by using expressions much too energetic for his character. He was made to deal out reproaches and impose injunctions. He commanded the separation into orders, annulled the previous resolutions of the third estate, but promised to sanction the abolition of pecuniary privileges, when their possessors had declared it. He retained all the feudal rights, both practical and honorary, as inviolable possessions. Thus he enforced the obedience of the commons, whilst he contented himself with taking that of the aristocracy for granted. He left the nobility and clergy sole judges of what concerned them peculiarly, and concluded by saying that, if he encountered fresh obstacles, he would take the welfare of the people into his own hands, and consider himself as their only representative. This tone and language exasperated all minds, not against the king, who had feebly vented passions not his own, but against the aristocracy, whose instrument he had consented to become.

BAILLY

The instant his discourse was finished, he ordered the assembly forthwith to separate. The nobility followed him, with a part of the clergy. The greater number of the ecclesiastical deputies remained, and the commons also continued stationary, still observing a profound silence. Mirabeau, who was always the first to take the lead, arose. "Gentlemen," said he, "I confess that what you have just heard might be for the safety of the country, if the gifts of despotism were not always suspicious. A parade of arms, a violation of the national temple, to command you to be happy! Where are the enemies of the nation? Is Catiline at our gates? I call upon you, by the investiture of your dignity and of your legislative functions, to respect the sacred obligation of your oath; recollect it does not permit you to separate until the constitution is established."

The marquis de Brézé, grand-master of the ceremonies, entered at this moment, and addressed himself to Bailly. "Have you heard," he asked, "the orders of the king?" and Bailly answered, "I am about to take those

of the assembly." Mirabeau advanced. "Yes, sir," he exclaimed, "we have heard the views wherewith the king has been prompted; but you have here no voice, or place, or right to speak. However, to avoid delay, go to your master, and tell him that we are here by the power of the people, and that we will not be driven forth but by the power of bayonets." M. de Brézé withdrew. Sieyès then uttered these words: "We are to-day what we were yesterday: let us deliberate." The assembly disposed itself to debate upon the maintenance of its previous resolutions. "The first of these resolutions," said Barnave, "declares what you are; the second refers to the taxes, which you alone have the right to sanction; the third is the oath to do your duty. None of these measures needs the royal assent. The king cannot abrogate what his consent would not fortify."

At this instant, workmen came to remove the benches, armed soldiers traversed the hall, others encompassed it outside, and the bodyguards advanced even to the door. The assembly, without concerning itself with the interruption, remained upon the seats and collected the votes; there was no dissentient voice against adhering to all the previous resolutions. Nor was this all. In the heart of a royal city, in the midst of court retainers, and deprived of the aid of that people afterwards so formidable, the assembly was exposed to intimidation. Mirabeau repaired to the tribune, and proposed to decree the inviolability of each deputy. The assembly, merely able to oppose a majestic expression to brute force, instantly declared each of its members inviolable, and all who should do injury to their persons, traitors.

In the meantime, the nobility, who believed the state saved by this bed of justice, offered their congratulations to the prince who had suggested it, and carried them from the prince to the queen. The queen, holding her son in her arms, and showing him to these enraptured servants, received their homage, and gave way to a blind and fatal confidence. At that very instant shouts were heard; all hastened towards the noise, and the intelligence was soon spread that the people, gathered into a crowd, were applauding Necker for not appearing at the royal sitting. Alarm immediately succeeded to joy. The king and queen caused Necker to be called, and those august personages were compelled to entreat him to retain his portfolio. The minister consented, and restored to the court some portion of the popularity he had preserved by absenting himself from that disastrous sitting.

THE REVOLUTION BEGINS

Thus was the first revolution brought about. The third estate had obtained the legislative power, and its adversaries had lost it by too great eagerness to grasp it all. In a few days this legislative revolution was consummated. Certain petty annoyances were again resorted to, such as impeding the internal communications in the halls of the states; but they were too contemptible to have any effect. On the 24th the majority of the clergy repaired to the assembly, and demanded the verification in common, with the view of afterwards deliberating upon the propositions advanced by the king in the sitting of the 23rd of June. The minority of the clergy continued to occupy their peculiar chamber. Every day brought with it fresh accessions, and the assembly saw the number of its members perpetually on the increase. Addresses poured in from all quarters, conveying the sympathy and approbation of the towns and provinces. The plaudits of the galleries, though often annoying to the assembly, had nevertheless served to animate it in its course, and it ventured not to forbid them.

The majority of the nobility continued its sittings amid tumult and the most violent exasperation. Apprehensions spread amongst those who ruled that order, and the motion for a junction came from those very members who had formerly induced its resistance. But its passions, already too excited, were not easily controlled. The king was obliged to write a letter; the court and its high functionaries were reduced to entreat. "The junction will be but transitory," said they to the most stubborn; "troops are approaching: yield to save the king." Acquiescence was wrung from them in the midst of disorder, and the majority of the nobles, accompanied by the minority of the clergy, repaired on the 27th of June to the general assembly. The duke of Luxemburg, speaking in the name of all, said that they came to give the king a proof of respect, and to the nation an evidence of patriotism. "The family is now complete," answered Bailly. Assuming that the union was consummated, and that the question as to verification was disposed of, and that it remained for them only to deliberate in common, he added, "We shall now be able to proceed, without intermission and without distraction, with the regeneration of the kingdom and the public welfare."

More than one silly expedient was employed to support an appearance of not having done what necessity had superinduced. The new-comers always entered after the opening of the sittings, all in a body, and so as to uphold their character as an order. They affected to remain standing behind the president, and in a manner to avoid the appearance of sitting. Bailly, with infinite address and firmness, succeeded in subduing their repugnance, and inducing them to take their seats. They wished likewise to dispute his right to the presidency, not by an open demonstration, but by secret intrigue or by despicable trickery. Bailly was resolute in his retention, not from ambition, but from duty; and men beheld a simple citizen, known for no qualifications more imposing than virtue and talent, presiding over all the magnates of the kingdom and the church. It ought to have been palpable to all understandings that the legislative revolution was achieved.

The object of the new convocation was the reform of the state, that is to say, the establishment of a constitution, of which France was utterly devoid, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary. If that name be applied to every species of relation between the governed and the governors, France unquestionably possessed a constitution; it had a king who commanded, and subjects who obeyed; ministers who imprisoned at pleasure; farmers of the revenue who wrung the last farthing from the people; and parliaments which condemned unfortunates to the wheel. The most barbarous nations have such orders of constitutions. There was in France an institution called states-general, but without precise functions, without fixed periods for assembling, and when convoked, invariably without result. There was a royal authority which had been alternately powerless and absolute. There were tribunals or supreme courts, which had often joined legislative to judicial power; but there was no law which secured the responsibility of the agents of power, the liberty of the press, the freedom of person, or any of those guarantees, in fine, which, in the social state, make amends for the fiction of natural liberty.

The necessity for a constitution was confessed and generally felt; all the instructions had energetically asserted it, and had even formally laid down the fundamental principles upon which that constitution should be based. They had unanimously prescribed a monarchical government, hereditary descent from male to male, the exclusive attribution of executive power to the king, the responsibility of all his agents, the concurrence of the nation

and the king in the enactment of laws, the voting of taxes, and individual liberty. But they were divided as to the creation of one or of two legislative chambers; as to the duration, the prorogations, and the dissolution of the legislative body; as to the political existence of the clergy and the parliaments; and as to the extent of the liberty of the press. So many questions, either solved or started by the instructions, show sufficiently how the public mind was then awakened in all quarters of the kingdom, and how general and emphatic was the determination of France for liberty. But to frame a perfect constitution amidst the mouldering ruins of an antiquated legislation, in spite of all resistance, and with the unruly theories abroad, was a laborious and difficult task. Besides the dissensions inevitably arising from the diversity of interests, the natural divergences of opinion were likewise to be apprehended. An entire legislation to frame for a great people so powerfully excites all minds, inspires them with projects so vast, hopes so chimerical, that measures either vague or exaggerated, and often antagonistic, were to be anticipated. To infuse order into the labours, a committee was named, with instructions to investigate their extent, and to apportion their distribution. This committee was composed of the most moderate members of the assembly. Mounier, a sagacious though obstinate man, was its most indefatigable and influential member; he it was who arranged the order of proceeding.

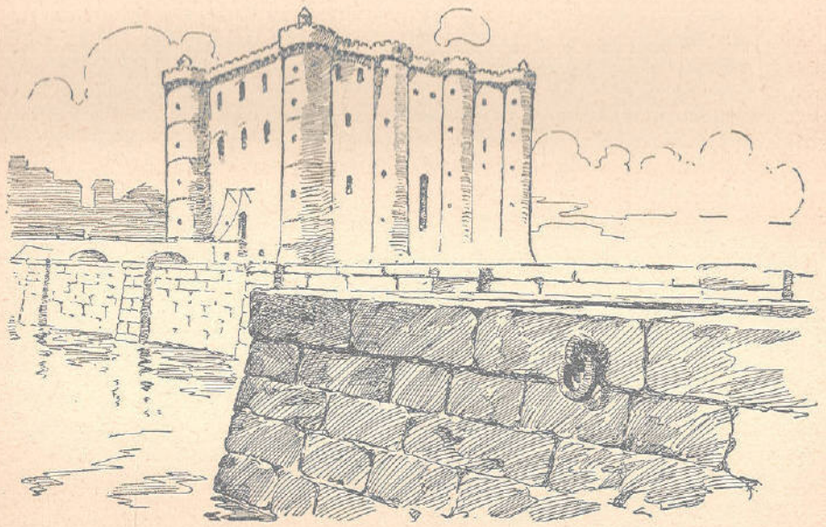
The difficulty of framing a constitution was not the only one this assembly had to encounter. Between a government hostilely disposed and a people famishing, who required prompt relief, it was almost impossible to avoid interfering with administration. Distrustful of authority, and pressed to succour the people, it was impelled, without any impulse of ambition, gradually to encroach upon the executive power. The clergy had already given an example of this tendency, by its insidious proposition to the third estate to enter forthwith upon the affair of provisions. The assembly was scarcely formed ere it named a committee on the necessaries of life.

A very short space separates Paris from Versailles, and it may be traversed several times in a day. All the movements in Paris were consequently immediately felt at Versailles, at court, and in the assembly. Paris at that time presented a new and extraordinary spectacle. The electors, collected into sixty districts, had refused to separate after the elections, and had remained assembled, either for the purpose of giving instructions to their deputies, or from that craving for union and agitation which is inherent in men, and which breaks out with a violence proportioned to the length of its suppression. They had experienced the same fate as the national assembly, the place of their sittings had been closed, and they were driven to seek another. They had ultimately obtained access to the town hall (*hôtel-de-ville*), and there they continued to meet, and to correspond with their deputies.

No public journals yet existed which reported the debates of the national assembly, and it was necessary to gather together in order to discuss and be apprised of events. The garden of the Palais Royal was the scene of the most crowded congregations. That magnificent garden, surrounded by the most gorgeous shops in Europe, and forming an appurtenance to the palace of the duke of Orleans, was the general resort for strangers, for the idle, and the dissipated, but, above all, for the most furious demagogues. The most daring speeches were delivered in the coffee-houses, or in the garden itself. An orator was ever and anon seen to mount on a table, and, gathering a crowd around him, to inflame with words of the greatest violence—words always uttered with impunity, for the mob reigned there with sovereign sway.

Men who were supposed devoted to the duke of Orleans showed themselves the most ardent. The wealth of that prince, his known profuseness, his enormous loans, his vicinage, his ambition, though vague, all conspired to insure his accusation. History, without designating individuals, can assert that gold was certainly distributed. If the sound part of the nation ardently desired liberty, if the uneasy and suffering populace was disposed to agitation, and anxious to better its condition, there were also instigators who sometimes excited that populace, and possibly directed some of its enterprises. But such an influence is not to be reckoned amongst the causes of the Revolution, for it is not with a handful of gold and secret manœuvres that a nation of twenty-five millions of men is stimulated to action.

An occasion for troubles soon presented itself. The French guards, chosen troops destined to form the king's guard, were at Paris. Four



THE BASTILLE

companies were alternately detached, and proceeded to do duty at Versailles. In addition to the extreme severity of the new discipline, these troops had also reason to complain of that of their colonel. During the pillage of Réveillon's house, they had indeed exhibited some ferocity against the people, but had afterwards been touched with remorse on that account, and, mingling every day with the citizens, they had yielded to their blandishments. Furthermore, soldiers and sub-officers felt that every chance of promotion was closed against them; they were irritated at seeing their young officers perform scarcely any duty, appear only on days of parade, and after the reviews not even accompany them to barracks. There was in the army, as well as in civil life, a third estate, which bore all burdens and participated in no benefit. A spirit of disobedience was not long in being manifested, and some of the guards were imprisoned in the Abbaye.

A general rush ensued to the Palais Royal: "To the Abbaye!" was the universal shout; and the multitude hastened thither. Its gates were

forced, and the soldiers being released were borne away in triumph (June 30th). The assembly could not avoid interfering. Adopting a course at once adroit and prudent, it expressed to the Parisians its wishes for the maintenance of good order, recommending them not to disturb it; and at the same time sent a deputation to the king, to implore his clemency, as the infallible means of restoring concord and tranquillity. The king, moved by the moderation of the assembly, promised clemency when order should be re-established. The French guards were immediately conducted back to prison, and a royal pardon set them forthwith at liberty.

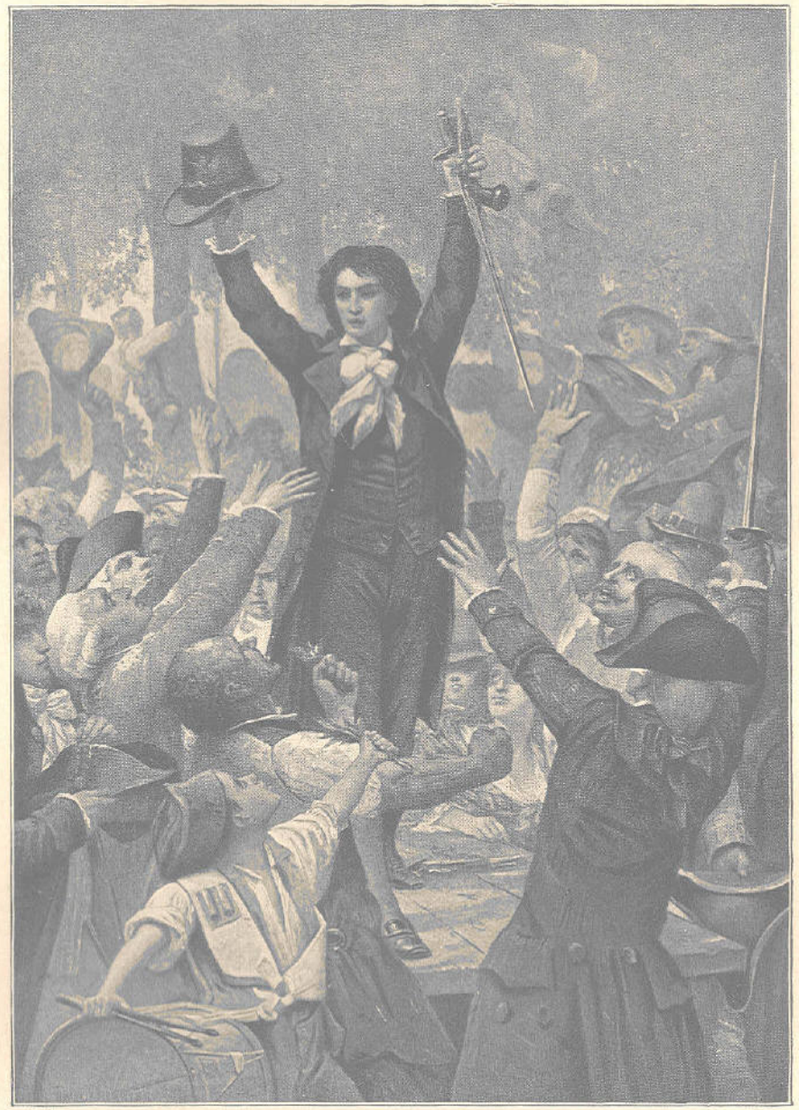
THE KING GATHERS TROOPS

All was going well up to this time; but the nobility, when coalescing with the two orders, had succumbed with reluctance, and on the promise that the junction should be of short duration. Necker had been retained merely to cover by his presence the secret plots that were hatching.

Troops were drawing near; the old marshal de Broglie had been named to the command-in-chief, and the baron de Besenval had received the particular command of those which surrounded Paris. Fifteen regiments, for the most part foreign, were in the vicinity of the capital. The boasting of the courtiers revealed the danger, and those conspirators, somewhat too prompt in their menaces, compromised their own schemes. The popular deputies were highly exasperated, and looked around for means of resistance. It is unknown, and will probably forever remain unknown, what share secret arrangements had in the insurrection of the 14th of July; but the matter is of trifling moment. The aristocracy were plotting, and the popular party might very naturally plot also. The means employed being the same, the only question is as to the justice of the cause; and justice was assuredly not with those who desired to subvert the union of the orders, to dissolve the national representation, and wreak vengeance on its most courageous deputies.

Mirabeau conceived that the surest means of intimidating the court was to compel it to a public discussion of the measures which it was palpably projecting. For this purpose it was necessary to make a public denunciation. If it hesitated to answer, if it evaded the subject, it was convicted, and the nation was apprised and roused. Mirabeau caused the labours upon the constitution to be suspended, and moved that the king be requested to withdraw the troops. He mingled in his speech sentiments of respect for the monarch, with the most severe invectives against the government. He said that every day fresh troops were advancing; that all the communications were intercepted, the bridges and walks changed into military posts; that both notorious and secret facts, hurried orders and counter orders, struck all eyes, and announced war. Adding bitter reproaches to these details, he exclaimed, "They bring more soldiers to intimidate the nation than an enemy would probably encounter upon an invasion, and a thousand times more, at least, than they were able to collect in aid of friends, martyrs to their fidelity, and especially to maintain that alliance with the Dutch, so valuable, so dearly acquired, and so shamefully lost."

His discourse was greeted with enthusiastic applause, and the address he proposed instantly adopted, modified only in one particular. When soliciting the removal of the troops, Mirabeau had proposed that they should be replaced by burgher guards, which paragraph was struck out. The address was then voted, only four voices dissenting. In this still celebrated document



CAMILLE DESMOULINS AT THE PALAIS ROYAL

(From the painting by Barrias)

[1789 A.D.]

which it is said he did not himself compose, but had furnished all its ideas to one of his friends, Mirabeau predicted almost all that was about to happen: the insurrection of the multitude, and the defection of the troops from their friendly intercourse with the citizens. As bold as he was sagacious, he dared to assure the king that his promises should not be vain.

The address was presented by a deputation of twenty-four members. The king, declining to explain himself, replied that this assembling of troops had no other object than the maintenance of public tranquillity, and the protection due to the assembly; and that, moreover, if that body had still any apprehensions, he would transfer it to Soissons or Noyon, and go himself to Compiègne. The assembly could scarcely feel satisfaction at such a reply, especially at the offer to remove it to a distance from the capital, and plant it between two camps. The count de Crillon argued that implicit faith should be placed on the word of a king and an honest man. "The word of an honest king," retorted Mirabeau, "is but a sad guarantee for the conduct of his ministry; our blind confidence in our kings has been our ruin: we asked the retreat of the troops, and not our flight before them. We must still insist on that measure without a moment's relaxation." This opinion was not supported. Mirabeau sufficiently urged open operations to induce his secret machinations to be pardoned, if it be true that any such were employed.

Necker had repeatedly told the king that if his services were disagreeable to him, he would cheerfully resign. "I rely upon your word," the king had upon such occasions replied. On the afternoon of the 11th of July, Necker received a note, in which the king called upon him to keep his word; urged him to depart; and added that he had sufficient confidence in him to hope that he would conceal his departure from all the world. Necker, justifying the honourable confidence of the monarch, set off without saying a word to his friends, or even to his daughter, and in a few hours was several leagues from Versailles. The next day, July 12th, was a Sunday.

A rumour was spread at Paris that Necker had been dismissed, as also Montmorin, La Luzerne, Puységur, and Saint-Priest. As their successors, were announced De Breteuil, La Vauguyon, De Broglie, Foulon, and Damécort, almost all notorious for their opposition to the popular cause. Alarm became predominant in Paris. The Palais Royal was thronged. A young man, afterwards known for his republican enthusiasm, Camille Desmoulins, sprang upon a table, drew forth pistols, with an exhortation to arm, tore a leaf from a tree, which he converted into a cockade, and induced everyone to follow his example.

THE PEOPLE TAKE UP ARMS (1789 A.D.)

The trees were instantaneously stripped, and the crowd repaired to a museum containing busts in wax. They seized upon those of Necker and the duke of Orleans, who was said to be menaced with exile, and then spread themselves over the quarters of Paris. This mob was passing along the street St. Honoré, when it met near the square Vendôme a detachment of the royal German regiment, which fell upon it, wounded several persons, and amongst others a soldier of the French guards. The latter, already disposed in favour of the people and against the royal Germans, with which regiment they had had a contest some days before, were quartered near the place Louis XV, and now fired upon their opponents.[1]

[1 Croker insists that the dismissal of Necker was only the excuse for an outbreak previously preparing; he emphasises the influence of the duke of Orleans as the procurer and payer of much violence.]

[1789 A.D.]

In the meantime, the troops which surrounded Paris concentrated on the Champ de Mars and the place Louis XV. The alarm then became unbounded, and changed to fury. The people rushed through the town with cries of "To arms!" The town hall was beset with applications for weapons. The electors composing the general assembly were collected there. They yielded the arms they had no power to refuse, and which were already seized, indeed, when they decided upon delivering them. These electors formed at that moment the only constituted authority. Deprived of all active power, they assumed such functions as circumstances required, and now summoned a convocation of the districts.

All the citizens repaired thither to deliberate upon the means of preserving themselves — on the one hand, from the fury of the multitude, and on the other, from the attack of the royal troops. During the night, the populace, always attracted to what chiefly interests it, forced and burned the barriers,[1] put the keepers to flight, and threw all the avenues open and free. The shops of the gunsmiths were also broken into and rifled. Those brigands, already signalised by their activity at Réveillon's, and who were seen on all occasions starting forth as if from the bowels of the earth, now made their appearance, armed with pikes and clubs, and carried terror into all quarters.

DESMOULINS

These events occurred in the course of Sunday, the 12th of July, and during the night following. On Monday morning, the electors, still sitting at the town hall, deemed it expedient to give a more legal aspect to their authority, and consequently despatched an invitation to the provost of the trades, the ordinary administrator of the city. This functionary would not consent to join them, except upon a formal requisition. This was complied with, and a certain number of electors was united with him, thus composing a municipality invested with all necessary powers. This municipality summoned the lieutenant of police before it, and in a few hours digested a plan of enrolment for a citizen militia. This militia was to be composed of forty-eight thousand men, furnished by the districts. The distinguishing symbol selected was the Parisian cockade, red and blue, instead of the green one of Desmoulins. Every person found in arms and wearing this cockade, without having been enrolled by his district in the citizen guard, was ordered to be arrested, disarmed, and punished.

Such was the origin of the national guards. This plan was adopted by all the districts, and they hastened to put it in execution. In the course of the same morning, the populace had plundered the convent of St. Lazare in search of corn, and had likewise broken into the *garde-meuble*, or armoury,

[1 At these barriers duties were collected on articles entering Paris.]

[1789 A.D.]

in pursuit of arms, the antique and curious weapons with which it was stored being torn down and carried off. A motley crew, bearing helmets and pikes of by-gone times, issued forth and overspread the town. The populace showed itself upon this occasion opposed to robbery; with its usual fickleness, it affected disinterestedness, leaving money untouched, taking nothing but arms, and even assisting to apprehend the brigands. The French guards and soldiers of the watch had offered their services, and they were accordingly enrolled in the citizen guard.

More arms were still demanded with loud shouts. The provost, Flesselles, who had at first refused to co-operate with his fellow-citizens, now evinced great zeal, and promised twelve thousand muskets that very day, and an additional number for the succeeding days. He asserted that he had made a contract with an unnamed gun-manufacturer. The thing appeared improbable, considering the shortness of the time that had elapsed. However, towards evening, the chests of arms announced by Flesselles were conveyed to the town hall; they were eagerly opened, and found to be full of old linen. At this unexpected disappointment, the multitude growled indignantly at the provost, who stated, in exculpation, that he had been deceived. To appease them further, he directed them to the Carthusian monastery, with the assurance that they would find arms there. The astounded monks received the infuriated rabble, led them through their quiet domicile, and convinced them that they possessed no such articles as had been mentioned by the provost. The people, more exasperated than ever, returned with cries of treachery. To satisfy them, the fabrication of fifty thousand pikes was forthwith ordered. Some barrels of powder destined for Versailles were descending the Seine in boats; these were seized, and an elector distributed the contents amidst the greatest danger.

Horrible confusion prevailed at this same town hall, the seat of the authorities, the headquarters of the militia, and the centre of all operations. Simultaneous demands were made on all in authority to provide for external security menaced by the court, for internal security menaced by the brigands, for calming the suspicions of the people, who thought themselves every instant betrayed, and for saving from their fury those who were the objects of their distrust. Around the hall were accumulated arrested carriages, intercepted convoys of wagons, and travellers waiting for permission to resume their journey. The citizens retired to their homes, held themselves in readiness for all attacks; they had unpaved the streets, dug trenches, and taken all possible measures for resisting a siege.

During these troubles in the capital, the assembly was a prey to the most serious alarms. On the morning of the 13th, the members repaired to the hall, full of apprehensions for impending events, and as yet ignorant of what had occurred at Paris. The discussion was proceeding when information was brought of the disturbances at Paris on the morning of the 13th, and the evils with which the capital was threatened, between undisciplined Frenchmen, who, according to the expression of the duke de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, were in the hands of no one, and disciplined foreigners who were in the hands of despotism. It was instantly resolved to send a deputation to the king, for the purpose of laying before him the desolation of his capital, and entreating him to order the withdrawal of the troops and the enrolment of citizen guards.

The king returned a cold and tranquil answer, little in accordance with his real feelings, and repeated that it was not possible for Paris to guard itself. Thereupon the assembly, exalted by the noblest heroism, passed a

memorable resolution, in which it insisted upon the removal of the troops and the establishment of citizen guards, declared the ministers and all the agents of power personally responsible, put upon the councillors of the king, "of whatever rank they might be," the responsibility of the misfortunes which impended; consolidated the public debt, denounced the utterance of the execrable word "bankruptcy," reasserted its preceding resolutions, and ordained the president to convey its regret to M. Necker, as also to the other ministers displaced.

After these measures, so indicative of prudence and energy, the assembly, in order to preserve its members from all personal violence, declared itself permanent, and named M. de la Fayette vice-president, for the purpose of relieving the estimable archbishop of Vienne, whom his age did not allow to sit both night and day.

The night between the 13th and 14th was thus passed amidst excitement and alarm. Every instant some dismal intelligence was announced and contradicted. Though all the projects of the court were not fathomed, it was nevertheless sufficiently notorious that several deputies were threatened; that violence was about to be employed against Paris and the most distinguished members of the assembly. Suspended for a fleeting interval, the sitting was resumed at five in the morning of the 14th. With an imposing and truly dignified composure, the assembly returned to its labours on the constitution, and discussed with infinite judgment the means of accelerating its execution, and preparing for it with prudence. A committee was named to frame the resolutions. The morning thus elapsed. Rumours more and more sinister were brought to the assembly; the king, it was said, would leave that night, and the assembly remain at the mercy of foreign regiments; that a grand scheme was prepared for the night of the 14th and 15th; that Paris was to be attacked at seven points, the Palais Royal surrounded, the assembly dissolved, and the declaration of the 23rd of June carried to the parliament; and that the exigencies of the treasury were to be surmounted by bankruptcy and state notes.

In the afternoon the terrors of the assembly were redoubled; the distant noise of a cannonade was heard, and the members laid their ears to the ground to catch the faintest sounds. Two members of the assembly, late arrived in all haste from Paris, brought intelligence that slaughter was at work in that city.

The night was beginning to fall, when the arrival of two electors was announced. The deepest stillness reigned in the hall; the noise of their steps was heard amid the darkness; and from their mouths it was learned that the Bastille had been attacked, cannon fired, and blood shed, and that the most frightful calamities threatened to ensue. A new deputation was immediately named before the preceding one had returned. Whilst preparing to depart, the first arrived and brought back an answer from the king. He had ordered, he said, the removal of the troops encamped in the Champ de Mars to a greater distance, and having been informed of the formation of citizen guards, he had nominated officers to command them.

Upon the arrival of the second deputation, the king, in great agitation, had addressed it in these words: "Gentlemen, you tear my heart more and more by the account you give me of the calamities of Paris. It is not possible that the orders given to the troops can have caused them." Only the removal of the army to a greater distance had been as yet obtained. It was two hours after midnight. The sitting was suspended for a short period, in the interim the events of the 14th of July were made fully known.[a]

CARLYLE'S ACCOUNT OF THE FALL OF THE BASTILLE

What a Paris, when the darkness fell! A European metropolitan City hurled suddenly forth from its old combinations and arrangements; to crash tumultuously together, seeking new. Use and wont now no longer direct any man; each man, with what of originality he has, must begin thinking; or following those that think. Seven hundred thousand individuals, on the sudden, find all their old paths, old ways of acting and deciding, vanish from under their feet. And so there go they, with clangour and terror, they know not as yet whether running, swimming, or flying — headlong into the New Era. With clangour and terror: from above, Broglie the war-god impends, preternatural, with his red-hot cannon-balls; and from below a preternatural Brigand-world menaces with dirk and firebrand: madness rules the hour.

On Monday, the huge City has awoke, not to its week-day industry; to what a different one! The working man has become a fighting man; has one want only: that of arms. The industry of all crafts has paused; — except it be the smith's, fiercely hammering pikes; and, in a faint degree, the kitchener's, cooking offhand victuals, for *bouche va toujours*. Women too are sewing cockades; — not now of green, which being D'Artois colour, the Hôtel-de-Ville has had to interfere in it; but of red and blue, our old Paris colours: these, once based on a ground of constitutional white, are the famed tri-colour — which (if Prophecy err not) "will go round the world."

All shops, unless it be the Bakers' and Vintners', are shut: Paris is in the streets — rushing, foaming like some Venice wine-glass into which you had dropped poison. The tocsin, by order, is pealing madly from all steeples. Arms, ye Elector Municipals; thou Flesselles with thy Echevins, give us arms! Flesselles gives what he can: fallacious, perhaps insidious promises of arms from Charleville; order to seek arms here, order to seek them there. The new Municipals give what they can; some 360 indifferent firelocks, the equipment of the City-Watch: "a man in wooden shoes, and without coat, directly clutches one of them, and mounts guard." Also as hinted, an order to all Smiths to make pikes with their whole soul.

Heads of Districts are in fervent consultation; subordinate Patriotism roams distracted, ravenous for arms. At the so-called Arsenal, there lies nothing but rust, rubbish, and saltpetre — overlooked too by the guns of the Bastille. His Majesty's Repository, what they call *Garde-Meuble*, is forced and ransacked: tapestries enough, and gauderies; but of serviceable fighting-gear small stock! Two silver-mounted cannons there are; an ancient gift from his Majesty of Siam to Louis XIV; gilt sword of the Good Henri; antique Chivalry arms and armour. These, and such as these, a necessitous Patriotism snatches greedily, for want of better. Among the indifferent firelocks are seen tournay-lances; the princely helm and hauberk glittering amid ill-hatted heads — as in a time when all times and their possessions are suddenly sent jumbling!

Look also at the Châtelet Prison. The Debtors' Prison of La Force is broken from without; and they that sat in bondage to Aristocrats go free: hearing of which the Felons at the Châtelet do likewise "dig up their pavements," and stand on the offensive; with the best prospects — had not Patriotism, passing that way, "fired a volley" into the Felon-world; and crushed it down again under hatches. Patriotism consorts not with thieving and felony: surely also Punishment, this day, hitches (if she still hitch) after Crime, with frightful shoes-of-swiftness! "Some score or two" of wretched persons, found prostrate with drink in the cellars of that Saint-Lazare, are

[1789 A.D.]

indignantly haled to prison; the Jailor has no room; whereupon, other place of security not suggesting itself, it is written, "*on les pendit*" (they hanged them). Brief is the word; not without significance, be it true or untrue!

In such circumstances, the Aristocrat, the unpatriotic rich man is packing up for departure. But he shall not get departed. A wooden-shod force has seized all Barriers, burnt or not: all that enters, all that seeks to issue, is stopped there, and dragged to the Hôtel-de-Ville: coaches, tumbrils, plate, furniture, and says Dusaulx*f* "many meal-sacks," in time even "flocks and herds" encumber the Place de Grève.

And so it roars, and rages, and brays; drums beating, steeples pealing; criers rushing with hand-bells: "Oyez, oyez, All men to their Districts to be enrolled!" The Districts have met in gardens, open squares; are getting marshalled into volunteer troops. No red-hot ball has yet fallen from Besenval's Camp; on the contrary, Deserters with their arms are continually dropping in: nay now, joy of joys, at two in the afternoon, the Gardes Françaises, being ordered to St. Denis, and flatly declining, have come over in a body! It is a fact worth many. Three thousand six hundred of the best fighting men, with complete accoutrement; with cannoneers even, and canon! Their officers are left standing alone; could not so much as succeed in "spiking the guns." The very Swiss, it may now be hoped, Château-Vieux and the others, will have doubts about fighting.

An Officer of Hussars, Time of the French Revolution

Our Parisian Militia, which some think it were better to name National Guard, is prospering as heart could wish. It promised to be forty-eight thousand; but will in a few hours double and quadruple that number: invincible, if we had only arms!

Meanwhile, the faster, O ye black-aproned Smiths, smite; with strong arm and willing heart. This man and that, all stroke from head to heel, shall thunder alternating, and ply the great forge-hammer, till stithy reel and ring again; while ever and anon, overhead, booms the alarm-cannon — for the City has now got gunpowder. Pikes are fabricated; fifty thousand of them, in six-and-thirty hours: judge whether the Black-aproned have been idle. Dig trenches, unpave the streets, ye others, assiduous, man and maid; cram the earth in barrel-barricades, at each of them a volunteer sentry; pile the whinstones in window-sills and upper rooms. Have scalding pitch, at least boiling water ready, ye weak old women, to pour it and dash it on Royal-Allemand, with your old skinny arms: your shrill curses along with it will not be wanting! — Patrols of the newborn National Guard, bearing torches, scour the streets, all that night; which otherwise are vacant, yet illuminated in every window by order. Strange-looking; like some naphtha-lighted City of the Dead, with here and there a flight of perturbed Ghosts.

O poor mortals, how ye make this Earth bitter for each other; this fearful and wonderful Life fearful and horrible; and Satan has his place in all hearts! Such agonies and ragings and wailings ye have, and have had, in

[1789 A.D.]

all times: — to be buried all, in so deep silence; and the salt sea is not swoln with your tears.

Great meanwhile is the moment, when tidings of Freedom reach us; when the long-enthralled soul, from amidst its chains and squalid stagnancy, arises, were it still only in blindness and bewilderment, and swears by Him that made it, that it will be free! Free? Understand that well, it is the deep commandment, dimmer or clearer, of our whole being, to be free. Freedom is the one purport, wisely aimed at, or unwisely, of all man's struggles, toilings, and sufferings, in this Earth. Yes, supreme is such a moment (if thou have known it): first vision as of a flame-girt Sinai, in this our waste Pilgrimage, — which thenceforth wants not its pillar of cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night! Something it is even, — nay, something considerable, when the chains have grown corrosive, poisonous — to be free "from oppression by our fellow-man." Forward, ye maddened sons of France; be it towards this destiny or towards that! Around you is but starvation, falsehood, corruption and the calm of death. Where ye are is no abiding.

Imagination may, imperfectly, figure how Commandant Besenval, in the Champ de Mars, has worn out these sorrowful hours. Insurrection raging all round; his men melting away! From Versailles, to the most pressing messages, comes no answer; or once only some vague word of answer which is worse than none. A Council of Officers can decide merely that there is no decision: Colonels inform him, "weeping," that they do not think their men will fight. Cruel uncertainty is here: war-god Broglie sits yonder, inaccessible in his Olympus; does not descend terror-clad, does not produce his whiff of grapeshot; sends no orders.

Unfortunate old military gentlemen, it is your hour, not of glory! Old Marquis de Launay too, of the Bastille, has pulled up his drawbridges long since, "and retired into his interior"; with sentries walking on his battlements, under the midnight sky, aloft over the glare of illuminated Paris; — whom a National Patrol, passing that way, takes the liberty of firing at: "seven shots towards twelve at night," which do not take effect. This was the 13th day of July, 1789; a worse day, many said, than the last 13th was, when only hail fell out of Heaven, not madness rose out of Tophet, ruining worse than crops!

But, to the living and the struggling, a new Fourteenth morning dawns. Under all the roofs of this distracted City is the nodus of a drama, not untragical, crowding towards solution. From earliest light, a sleepless Permanent Committee has heard the old cry, now waxing almost frantic, mutinous: "Arms! Arms!" Arms are the one thing needful: with arms we are an unconquerable man-defying National Guard; without arms, a rabble to be whiffed with grapeshot. Happily the word has arisen, for no secret can be kept — that there lie muskets at the Hôtel des Invalides.

In any case, behold about nine in the morning, our National Volunteers rolling in long wide flood, southwestward to the Hôtel des Invalides: in search of the one thing needful. The King's muskets are the Nation's. The walls are scaled, no Invalide firing a shot; the gates must be flung open. The arms are found; all safe there; lying packed in straw — apparently with a view to being burned! and eight-and-twenty thousand sufficient fire-locks are on the shoulders of as many National Guards, lifted thereby out of darkness into fiery light.

Let Besenval look at the glitter of these muskets, as they flash by! Gardes Françaises, it is said, have cannon levelled on him; ready to open,

if need were, from the other side of the River. Motionless sits he; "astonished," says Besenval,g "at the proud bearing (*fière contenance*) of the Parisians."—And now, to the Bastille, ye intrepid Parisians! There grapeshot still threatens: thither all men's thoughts and steps are now tending.

Old De Launay, as we hinted, withdrew "into his interior" soon after midnight of Sunday. He remains there ever since, hampered, as all military gentlemen now are, in the saddest conflict of uncertainties. The Hôtel-de-Ville "invites" him to admit National Soldiers, which is a soft name for surrendering. On the other hand, His Majesty's orders were precise. His garrison is but eighty-two old Invalides, reinforced by thirty-two young Swiss; his walls indeed are nine feet thick, he has cannon and powder; but, alas, only one day's provision of victuals. The city too is French, the poor garrison mostly French. Rigorous old De Launay, think what thou wilt do!

Woe to thee, De Launay, in such an hour, if thou canst not, taking some one firm decision, rule circumstances! Soft speeches will not serve; hard grapeshot is questionable; but hovering between the two is unquestionable. Ever wilder swells the tide of men; their infinite hum waxing ever louder, into imprecations, perhaps into crackle of stray musketry,—which latter, on walls nine feet thick, cannot do execution. The Outer Drawbridge has been lowered for Thuriot; new deputation of citizens (it is the third, and noisiest of all) penetrates that way into the Outer Court: soft speeches producing no clearance of these, De Launay gives fire; pulls up his Drawbridge. A slight sputter;—which has kindled the too combustible chaos; made it a roaring fire-chaos! Bursts forth Insurrection, at sight of its own blood (for there were deaths by that sputter of fire), into endless rolling explosion of musketry, distraction, execration;—and over head, from the Fortress, let one great gun, with its grapeshot, go booming, to shew what we could do. The Bastille is besieged!

On, then, all Frenchmen, that have hearts in your bodies! Roar with all your throats, of cartilage and metal, ye Sons of Liberty; stir spasmodically whatsoever of utmost faculty is in you, soul, body, or spirit; for it is the hour! Smite, thou Louis Tournay, cartwright of the Marais, old-soldier of the Regiment Dauphiné; smite at that Outer Drawbridge chain, though the fiery hail whistles round thee! Never, over nave or felloe, did thy axe strike such a stroke. Down with it, man; down with it to Orcus: let the whole accursed Edifice sink thither, and Tyranny be swallowed up forever! Mounted, some say, on the roof of the guard-room, some "on bayonets stuck into joints of the wall," Louis Tournay smites, brave Aubin Bonnemère (also an old soldier) seconding him: the chain yields, breaks; the huge Drawbridge slams down, thundering (*avec fracas*). Glorious: and yet, alas, it is still but the outworks. The Eight grim Towers, with their Invalide musketry, their paving stones and cannon-mouths, still soar aloft intact;—Ditch yawning impassable, stone-faced; the inner Drawbridge with its back towards us: the Bastille is still to take!

To describe this Siege of the Bastille (thought to be one of the most important in History) perhaps transcends the talent of mortals. Could one but, after infinite reading, get to understand so much as the plan of the building! But there is open Esplanade, at the end of the Rue Saint-Antoine; there are such Forecourts, *Cour Avancé*, *Cour de l'Orme*, arched Gateway (where Louis Tournay now fights); then new drawbridges, dormant-bridges, rampart-bastions, and the grim Eight Towers: a labyrinthic Mass, high-frowning there, of all ages from 20 years to 420;—beleaguered

in this its last hour, as we said, by mere Chaos come again! Ordnance of all calibres; throats of all capacities; men of all plans, every man his own engineer: seldom since the war of Pygmies and Cranes was there seen so anomalous a thing. Frantic Patriots pick up the grapeshots; bear them, still hot (or seemingly so), to the Hôtel-de-Ville:—Paris, you perceive, is to be burnt! Paris wholly has got to the acme of its frenzy; whirled, all ways, by panic madness. At every street-barricade, there whirls simmering a minor whirlpool—strengthening the barricade, since God knows what is coming; and all minor whirlpools play distractedly into that grand Fire-Mahlstrom which is lashing round the Bastille.

And so it lashes and it roars. Cholat the wine-merchant has become an impromptu cannoneer. See Georget, of the Marine Service, fresh from Brest, ply the King of Siam's cannon. Singular (if we were not used to the like): Georget lay, last night, taking his ease at his inn; the King of Siam's cannon also lay, knowing nothing of him, for a hundred years. Yet now, at the right instant, they have got together, and discourse eloquent music. For, hearing what was toward, Georget sprang from the Brest Diligence, and ran. Gardes Françaises also will be here, with real artillery: were not the walls so thick!

Upwards from the Esplanade, horizontally from all neighbouring roofs and windows, flashes one irregular deluge of musketry, without effect. The Invalides lie flat, firing comparatively at their ease from behind stone; hardly through portholes, shew the tip of a nose. We fall, shot; and make no impression!

Let conflagration rage; of whatsoever is combustible! Guard-rooms are burnt, Invalides mess-rooms. A young beautiful lady, seized escaping in these Outer Courts, and thought falsely to be De Launay's daughter, shall be burnt in De Launay's sight; she lies swooned on a paillasse: but again a Patriot, it is brave Aubin Bonnemère the old soldier, dashes in, and rescues her. Straw is burnt; three cartloads of it, hauled thither, go up in white smoke: almost to the choking of Patriotism itself. Smoke as of Tophet; confusion as of Babel; noise as of the Crack of Doom!

Blood flows; the aliment of new madness. The wounded are carried into houses of the Rue Cerisaie; the dying leave their last mandate not to yield till the accursed Stronghold fall. And yet, alas, how fall? The walls are so thick! The Firemen are here, squirting with their fire-pumps on the Invalides cannon, to wet the touchholes; they unfortunately cannot squirt so high; but produce only clouds of spray. Every man his own engineer! And still the fire-deluge abates not: even women are firing, and Turks; at least one woman (with her sweetheart), and one Turk, according to the Deux Amis.*j* Gardes Françaises have come: real cannon, real cannoneers.

How the great Bastille Clock ticks (inaudible) in its Inner Court there, at its ease, hour after hour; as if nothing special, for it or the world, were passing! It tolled One when the firing began; and is now pointing towards Five, and still the firing slakes not. Far down, in their vaults, the seven Prisoners hear muffled din as of earthquakes; their Turnkeys answer vaguely.

Woe to thee, De Launay, with thy poor hundred Invalides! Broglie is distant, and his ears heavy: Besenval hears, but can send no help.

What shall De Launay do? One thing only De Launay could have done: what he said he would do. De Launay could not do it. Distracted, he hopes in the middle of despair; surrenders not his Fortress; declares

that he will blow it up, seizes torches to blow it up,[1] and does not blow it. Unhappy old De Launay, it is the death-agony of thy Bastille and thee! Jail, Jailoring, and Jailor, all three, such as they may have been, must finish.

For four hours now has the World-Bedlam roared: call it the World-Chimæra, blowing fire! The poor Invalides have sunk under their battlements, or rise only with reversed muskets: they have made a white flag of napkins. Terms of surrender: Pardon, immunity to all! Are they accepted?—"*Foi d'officier*" (on the word of an officer), answers half-pay Hulin,—or half-pay Elie, for men do not agree on it, "they are!" Sinks the drawbridge, rushes in the living deluge: the Bastille is fallen! *Victoire! La Bastille est prise!*

Why dwell on what follows? Hulin's *foi d'officier* should have been kept, but could not. The Swiss stand drawn up, disguised in white canvass smocks; the Invalides without disguise; their arms all piled against the wall. The first rush of victors, in ecstasy that the death-peril is passed, "leaps joyfully on their necks"; but new victors rush, and ever new, also in ecstasy, not wholly of joy. As we said, it was a living deluge, plunging headlong: had not the Gardes Françaises, in their cool military way, "wheeled round with arms levelled," it would have plunged suicidally, by the hundred or the thousand, into the Bastille-ditch.

And so it goes plunging through court and corridor; billowing uncontrollable, firing from windows—on itself; in hot frenzy of triumph, of grief and vengeance for its slain. The poor Invalides will fare ill; one Swiss, running off in his white smock, is driven back with a death-thrust. Let all Prisoners be marched to the Townhall, to be judged!—Alas, already one poor Invalide has his right hand slashed off him; his maimed body dragged to the Place de Grève, and hanged there. This same right hand, it is said, turned back De Launay from the Powder-Magazine, and saved Paris.

De Launay, "discovered in gray frock with poppy-coloured riband," is for killing himself with the sword of his cane. He shall to the Hôtel-de-Ville; Hulin, Maillard and others escorting him; Elie marching foremost "with the capitulation-paper on his sword's point." Through roarings and cursings; through hustlings, clutchings, and at last through strokes! Your escort is hustled aside, felled down; Hulin sinks exhausted on a heap of stones. Miserable De Launay! He shall never enter the Hôtel-de-Ville: only his "bloody hair-queue, held up in a bloody hand"; that shall enter, for a sign. The bleeding trunk lies on the steps there; the head is off through the streets; ghastly, aloft on a pike.

Rigorous De Launay has died; crying out, "O friends, kill me fast!" Merciful De Losme must die; though Gratitude embraces him, in this fearful hour, and will die for him; it avails not. Brothers, your wrath is cruel! Your Place de Grève is become a Throat of the Tiger; full of mere fierce bellowings and thirst of blood. One other officer is massacred, one other Invalide is hanged on the Lamp-iron; with difficulty, with generous perseverance, the Gardes Françaises will save the rest. Provost Flesselles, stricken long since with the paleness of death, must descend from his seat, "to be judged at the Palais Royal"—alas, to be shot dead, by an unknown hand, at the turning of the first street!

O evening sun of July, how, at this hour, thy beams fall slant on reapers amid peaceful woody fields; on old women spinning in cottages; on ships

[1 According to Croker the story that De Launay threatened to blow up the Bastille was only "a silly rumour of the day."]

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far out in the silent main; on Balls at the Orangerie of Versailles, where high-rouged Dames of the Palace are even now dancing with double-jacketed Hussar-Officers;—and also on this roaring Hell-porch of a Hôtel-de-Ville! Babel-Tower, with the confusion of tongues, were not Bedlam added with the conflagration of thoughts, was no type of it. One forest of distracted steel bristles, endless, in front of an Electoral Committee; points itself, in horrid radii, against this and the other accused breast. It was the Titans warring with Olympus; and they, scarcely crediting it, have conquered: prodigy of prodigies; delirious, as it could not but be.

Along the streets of Paris circulate Seven Bastille Prisoners, borne shoulder-high; seven Heads on pikes; the Keys of the Bastille; and much else. See also the Gardes Françaises, in their steadfast military way, marching home to their barracks, with the Invalides and Swiss kindly enclosed in hollow square.

Likewise ashlar stones of the Bastille continue thundering through the dusk; its paper archives shall fly white. Old secrets come to view; and long-buried Despair finds voice. Read this portion of an old Letter:[1] "If for my consolation Monseigneur would grant me, for the sake of God and the Most Blessed Trinity, that I could have news of my dear wife; were it only her name on a card, to shew that she is alive! It were the greatest consolation I could receive; and I should forever bless the greatness of Monseigneur." Poor Prisoner, who namest thyself Quéret-Démery, and hast no other history—she is dead, that dear wife of thine, and thou art dead! 'Tis fifty years since thy breaking heart put this question; to be heard now first, and long heard, in the hearts of men.

But so does the July twilight thicken; so must Paris, as sick children, and all distracted creatures do, brawl itself finally into a kind of sleep.

Besenval has decamped, under cloud of dusk, "amid a great affluence of people, who did not harm him; he marches, with faint-growing tread, down the left bank of the Seine, all night—towards infinite space. Resummoned shall Besenval himself be; for trial, for difficult acquittal. His King's-troops, his Royal Allemand, are gone hence forever.

The Versailles Ball and lemonade is done; the Orangerie is silent except for nightbirds. Over in the Salle des Menus, Vice-president La Fayette, with unsnuffed lights, "with some Hundred or so of Members, stretched on tables round him," sits erect; outwatching the Bear. This day, a second solemn Deputation went to his Majesty; a second and then a third: with no effect. What will the end of these things be?

In the Court, all is mystery, not without whisperings of terror: though ye dream of lemonade and epaulettes, ye foolish women! His Majesty, kept in happy ignorance, perhaps dreams of double-barrels and the Woods of Meudon. Late at night, the Duke de Liancourt, having official right of entrance, gains access to the Royal Apartments; unfolds, with earnest clearness, in his constitutional way, the Job's-news. "*Mais*," said poor Louis, "*c'est une révolte!*" (Why, that is a revolt!)—"Sire," answered Liancourt, "it is not a revolt—it is a revolution."

The Fall of the Bastille may be said to have shaken all France to the deepest foundations of its existence. The rumour of these wonders flies every where: with the natural speed of Rumour; with an effect thought to be preternatural, produced by plots. Did D'Orléans or Laclos, nay did Mirabeau (not overburdened with money at this time) send riding Couriers

[1 Dated, *à la Bastille, 7 octobre, 1752;* signed Quéret-Démery.—LINGUET.]

out from Paris; to gallop "on all radii," or highways, towards all points of France? It is a miracle, which no penetrating man will call in question.

Thus, in any case, with what rubs soever, shall the Bastille be abolished from our Earth; and with it, Feudalism, Despotism; and, one hopes, Scoundrelism generally, and all hard usage of man by his brother man. Alas, the Scoundrelism and hard usage are not so easy of abolition! But as for the Bastille, it sinks day after day, and month after month; its ashlars and boulders tumbling down continually, by express orders of our Municipals. Crowds of the curious roam through its caverns; gaze on the skeletons found walled-up, on the *oubliettes*, iron cages, monstrous stone-blocks with padlock chains. One day we discern Mirabeau there; along with the Genevese Dumont.[i] Workers and onlookers make reverent way for him; fling verses, flowers on his path, Bastille-papers and curiosities into his carriage, with *vivats*.

Able Editors compile Books from the *Bastille Archives;* from what of them remain unburnt. The Key of that Robber-Den shall cross the Atlantic; shall lie on Washington's hall-table. The great Clock ticks now in a private patriotic Clockmaker's apartment; no longer measuring hours of mere heaviness. Vanished is the Bastille, what we call vanished: the body, or sandstones, of it hanging, in benign metamorphosis, for centuries to come, over the Seine waters, as Pont Louis Seize; the soul of it living, perhaps still longer, in the memories of men.

So far, ye august Senators, with your Tennis-Court Oaths, your inertia and impetus, your sagacity and pertinacity, have ye brought us. "And yet think, Messieurs," as the Petitioners justly urged, "you who were our saviours did yourselves need saviours"—the brave Bastillers, namely; workmen of Paris; many of them in straitened pecuniary circumstances! Subscriptions are opened; Lists are formed, more accurate than Elie's; harangues are delivered. A Body of "Bastille Heroes," tolerably complete, did get together; —comparable to the Argonauts; hoping to endure like them. But in little more than a year, the whirlpool of things threw them asunder again, and they sank. So many highest superlatives achieved by man are followed by new higher; and dwindle into comparatives and positives! The Siege of the Bastille, weighed with which, in the Historical balance, most other sieges, including that of Troy Town, are gossamer, cost, as we find, in killed and mortally wounded, on the part of the Besiegers, some Eighty-three persons: on the part of the Besieged, after all that straw-burning, fire-pumping, and deluge of musketry, One poor solitary Invalide, shot stone-dead (*roide-mort*) on the battlements! The Bastille Fortress, like the City of Jericho, was overturned by miraculous sound.[k]

TAINE'S PICTURE OF THE OLD RÉGIME

Whatever act or day may be taken as the beginning of the French Revolution, with the fall of the Bastille flames of revolt went leaping skyward. Its memories were grim with tyranny, though the mild Louis XVI had almost emptied its cells, and did not abuse the *lettres de cachet* after the manner of his predecessor. But the oppression had reached an intolerable state before him, and his palliatives were as weak as his conduct was untrustworthy from vacillation and ingrained autocracy. We are about to enter a hideous carnival of public atrocity. But it is only fair to remember what had gone before, and of what quality was the aristocracy that bowed the peasantry and the middle-class to the dust. Let us read at some length the summing-up of

the Old Régime as Taine[l] made it in his famous book. Let us remember in later pages what follows here, that judgment may be the better balanced.[a]

In order to understand thoroughly the history of the French kings, it is necessary to start with the assumption that the land of France is their property by hereditary right, a sort of farm transmitted from father to son, small at first but gradually growing larger, owing to the many profitable transactions the astute proprietor is able to make at the expense of his neighbours, until finally it attains a prodigious size. After eight hundred years of such proprietorship the royal possessions comprise twenty-seven thousand square leagues. On many points the owner's interest and pride have been in accord with the public good, and on the whole he cannot be called a bad manager, rather a better one than some, since he has constantly contrived to enrich himself. Whether feudal or modern, however, the domain is still his to use or abuse as he pleases, and he who uses without stint invariably finishes by abusing.

Under such conditions to subordinate private interests entirely to those of state would require the saintliness of Louis IX, or the stoicism of Marcus Aurelius, whereas the king is merely a nobleman like all the others about his court; a trifle less well-bred, possibly, and exposed to greater temptations and worse counsels, but having like them his personal pride and tastes, his family, wife, mistresses, and boon companions who must all be made content before public affairs are given a thought.

Indeed, for a period of a hundred years, or from 1672 to 1774, every war that is undertaken covers some personal or family intrigue, some impulse of piqued vanity, or the gratification of a woman's whim.[1] Louis XV's conduct of his wars is even more reprehensible than the spirit in which he undertakes them, and Louis XVI, in every act of his foreign policy, is under the strictest conjugal control. In his private life the king resembles any other nobleman of France with the exception that being the greatest he is surrounded by a greater pomp. We shall presently describe his mode of living and it will be seen by means of what exactions so much splendour is maintained; meanwhile let us note a few details.

The Spendthrift Court

According to authentic accounts Louis XV expends for Madame de Pompadour alone the sum of thirty-six million livres, equal to seventy-two millions [or £2,800,000 sterling] at the present time. D'Argenson[n] states that in 1751 there are four thousand horses in the king's stables, and that his household and personal expenses amount for the same year to sixty-eight millions, or about one quarter of the public revenue. What wonder in all this when one considers that the sovereign of these times is looked upon as a mighty lord of the manor, whose perfect right it is to enjoy to the full the prerogatives of his position? He is at liberty to build, receive, give feasts, and hunt, precisely as he wills, and being absolute master of his own means can bestow money upon whom he pleases, and a special grace seems to descend upon those whom he singles out for such high favour.

Necker, taking charge of the state finances, finds that twenty-eight millions in pensions are annually leaving the royal treasury, and after his downfall money is poured in streams upon the favourites of the court. Even

[1] Madame de Pompadour, writing to Marshal d'Estrées concerning the operations of his campaign, traced out a species of map for him and marked with patches the places she advised him to attack or defend. —MADAME DE GENLIS.[m]

during his time the king is cajoled into raising to fortune the friends of his wife; to the countess de Polignac he gives four hundred thousand livres for the payment of her debts, eight hundred thousand as a marriage portion for her daughter, the promise of an estate yielding thirty-five thousand livres annually for herself, and to her lover, the count de Vaudreuil, a pension of thirty thousand livres. To the princess de Lamballe, both as salary for herself in the office of superintendent that has been re-established for her benefit, and as a pension for her brother, he gives one hundred thousand écus yearly!

But it is under Calonne that prodigality reaches a truly insensate height. The king has been reproached with parsimony; why should he draw his purse-strings tight? Once launched on the road of free giving he bestows, buys, builds, exchanges, and comes to the aid of nobles in distress, with a truly royal lavishness; he literally scatters money on all sides. A single instance will suffice to illustrate: when the noble family of Guémené fail, he purchases of them, for 12,500,000 livres, three estates for which they had paid only four millions, and in exchange for two estates in Brittany, which bring in barely 33,758 livres, he cedes to them the principality of Dombes which yields an income of 70,000 livres. The Red Book will reveal that 700,000 livres are paid out in pensions to the different members of the house of Polignac, and that nearly two millions in gifts and benefices are received yearly by the house of Noailles. Forgetting that each ill-considered act of generosity bears within it the seeds of destruction, that, as Mirabeau[o] says, "every courtier who obtains a pension of six thousand livres receives the price of six villages," the monarch, whose smallest largess, under the present system of taxation, means a period of fasting for the peasant, is taking bread from the poor to give carriages to the rich. Expressed in brief, the centre of government is the centre of the country's ill; all injustice, all suffering proceed from there as from a swollen and festering sore, and there it is that the pent-up poison will one day overflow. When it does we shall see but the just and inevitable effect of exploiting great privileges selfishly instead of for the benefit of others. The words *sire* and *seigneur* mean "protector who nurtures, *l'ancien*, or the chief who leads."[1] For many years, in fact, before the great final catastrophe, France has been in a state of dissolution, simply because the men upon whom her highest privileges are bestowed have forgotten their character as instruments for the public good.

One day when hunting Louis XV, according to Besenval,[q] asked the duke de Choiseul who accompanied him how much he thought the carriage in which they were seated cost. Choiseul replied that he would guarantee to buy one like it for five or six thousand livres, but that his majesty, paying after the manner of kings, with a wide margin in the matter of time, had probably been obliged to give as high as eight thousand. "You have come nowhere near it," answered the king, "the carriage just as you see it cost me a round thirty thousand livres. The stealing that goes on in my household is simply outrageous, but I know of no way to prevent it."

Indeed all connected with the court whether great or lowly had the faculty of gaining high emoluments; in the king's stables were fifty-four horses for the use of the head equerry alone; Madame de Brionne, who discharged some office about the stables during the minority of her son, had the use of thirty-eight, while 215 grooms were told off, and as many horses were set aside for the service of various other persons who had no connection

[1] *Lord*, in old Saxon, signifies "he who nurtures"; *seigneur*, in Latin of the Middle Ages, signifies *l'ancien*, or the "leader of the flock."

with the department. What a swarm of parasites on that one branch of the royal tree! Elsewhere I see that Madame Elizabeth, always so abstemious, consumes in a year thirty thousand livres' worth of fish; meat and game to the amount of 70,000 livres, and candles to the amount of sixty thousand. *Mesdames* burn a quantity of white and yellow wax candles that cost 215,068 livres, and the bills for lighting of the queen come to 157,109 livres.

At Versailles the street, formerly bordered with booths, is still shown where the valets of the king sold enough scraps from the royal table to feed the entire town. There seems to be not a single article from which the voracious domestic insects do not contrive to extract a rich substance. The king is alleged to drink each year 2,190 livres' worth of orgeat and lemonade; the "chief day and night broth" of Madame Royale, aged two years, costs per year 5,201 livres. Toward the close of the preceding reign, according to Arneth and Geffroy[p] the ladies in waiting report the following necessities for the dauphine: "Four pairs of shoes a week, three ells of ribbon a day to tie her morning gown, two ells of taffeta a day to cover the basket in which are placed her fan and gloves." Several years earlier the king had expended 200,000 livres annually for coffee, lemonade, chocolate, orgeat, and iced waters, while several persons were inscribed as receiving daily ten to twelve cups and it was calculated, according to Luynes,[q] that the coffee and rolls served each morning to the ladies in waiting came to 2,000 livres a year.

It is easy to conceive that in households thus governed the tradespeople who furnish the supplies are made to wait long for their money, so long, in fact, that they frequently refuse to furnish and retire into temporary hiding. Indeed to cover the loss occasioned by these certain delays they are obliged to charge five per cent. interest on the goods they deliver, so that in spite of the economy practised by Turgot the king still owes in 1778 more than 800,000 livres to his wine merchant, and nearly three millions and a half to his purveyor.[1] The same disorder reigns in all the households that surround the throne. "Madame de Guémené owes sixty thousand livres to her shoemaker, sixteen thousand to her paper-hanger, and to the rest of her furnishers she owes in proportion."

Money is a stream which, running carelessly and escaping on all sides, here in secret or tolerated domestic abuses, there in the prodigalities of the masters in houses, furniture, wearing-apparel, hospitality, and pleasures, is perilously near to becoming exhausted. The count of Artois, preparatory to a fête he gives in honour of the queen, causes Bagatelle to be demolished, rebuilt, newly furnished and arranged by a force of nine hundred men working day and night; and as there is not sufficient time to procure the stone, lime, and plaster from afar, he sends patrols of the Swiss guard out upon the highways, to seize all wagons loaded with such materials. The marshal De Soubise expends 200,000 livres in entertaining the king at dinner and over a single night in his country house.[2] The queen, concerning a gift she made the dauphin of a carriage, the gilded panels of which were set with rubies and sapphires, remarked innocently: "The king has increased my allowance by two hundred thousand livres; he surely does not mean that I shall keep them?"[3]

[1] National Archives, O, 738: "Interest paid to baker, 12,969 livres; to wine merchant, 39,631 livres; and to the purveyor, 173,899 livres."

[2] Barbier.[r] Belonging to the marshal De Soubise was a hunting lodge where the king came from time to time to partake of an omelette made of pheasants' eggs, costing 157 livres 10 sous.

[3] According to Madame de Genlis,[m] *Souvenirs de Félicie* and *Théatre d'Éducation*, a respectable young woman contracts debts in ten months amounting to 70,000 livres: "For a

The Fever of Gaiety and License

One cannot read a biography or any provincial document of that time without hearing the tinkle of carnival bells. At Mouchaix, at the house of the count de Bédée, uncle of Châteaubriand, "there was music and dancing and hunting and feasting from morning till night; it took capital as well as income to keep it all going." At Aix and Marseilles, in the highest circles of society, we read of nothing but concerts, balls, masquerades, and amateur theatricals, in which the countess de Mirabeau enacted the chief rôles. At Châteauroux, M. Dupin de Francueil kept about him a "troop of musicians, of lackeys, of cooks, of parasites, and horses and dogs, to whom he gave without counting, liking nothing as much as being happy himself and seeing everyone around him happy." At this sport he ruined himself, in the most light-hearted manner possible. Nothing avails to stifle this gaiety — neither age, nor exile, nor misfortune; it still survives even in 1793 in the prisons of the republic.

At Trianon, first before only forty persons, then before an audience of great size, the queen plays Colette in *Le Devin de Village*, Gotte in *La Gageure imprévue*, Rosine in *Le Barbier de Seville*, and Pierrette in *Le Chasseur et la Laitière*, the rest of the parts being taken by the highest nobles of the court. There is a theatre in the house of Monsieur, two in that of the count of Artois; the duke of Orleans possesses two, the count de Clermont two and the prince of Condé one.

Last and most significant trait of all is the style of play chosen to conclude the favourite entertainment of these fashionable merrymakers for whom life is a perpetual carnival, not a whit less shameless nor unrestrained than that of Venice. Such afterpieces are usually farces taken from the stories of La Fontaine, or the comic Italian authors, and are broad to the point of indecency, so that they are fit to be presented only to an audience of great princes or courtesans; palates cloyed with the sweetness of orgeat soon come to demand strong rum. The duke of Orleans sings upon the stage couplets of the vulgarest meaning, and one of his rôles is Bartholin in *Nicaire;* another is Blaise in *Jocande*. *Le Mariage sans curé*, *Léandre grosse*, *l'Amant poussif*, *Léandre Etalon* are the titles of some of the pieces written by "Collé, for the amusement of his highness and the court." For one that is only moderately spiced there are ten rank with the strongest seasoning. Some given at Brunoy by Monsieur so far exceed the bounds that the king regrets having come to witness them. "Such license was inconceivable; two ladies who were present were obliged to leave, and, crowning enormity, the queen was actually invited!" Gaiety in these days is a sort of intoxication that impels the drinker to empty the cask of the last drop of wine, and when the wine is gone to drink the dregs.

Not only at private supper parties, or where women of loose life are assembled, but in the highest court circles follies are perpetrated that would disgrace the lowest public-house. In a word society is made up of débauchées who shrink from nothing either in speech or deed. "For five or six months past," writes Madame de Genlis[m] in 1782, "suppers have been followed by a sort of 'blind man's buff' which ends in a general riot." To these feasts guests are invited two weeks in advance. On one occasion, "tables and chairs were overturned and twenty carafes of water were emptied upon the

small table 10 louis, for a chiffonnière 15 louis, for a bureau 800 livres, for a small writing-desk 200 francs, for a large writing-desk 300 francs; for rings, watch, chain, bracelets, etc., of hair, 9,900 francs."

floor. At half-past one I took my departure worn out with fatigue and smarting from the blows of handkerchiefs; leaving Madame de Clarence with her voice barely audible, her dress torn in shreds, a deep scratch on her arm, a contusion on her head, but congratulating herself on having given a supper of such surpassing gaiety, which would surely form the chief topic of conversation on the morrow."

These and similar are the excesses to which people are led by the appetite for pleasure constantly indulged.[1] Under the accumulated weight of such facts, as under the presence of the sculptor's thumb, the mask of the century gradually becomes transformed; first the grave, set physiognomy of the courtier softens into the genial countenance of the man of the world, then the lips, ever expanding into a wider and wider smile, at last break into the full brazen grimace of the rowdy of the streets.[l]

Turn from this picture of insane gaiety to the madhouse horror of the starving peasantry who dug out of the ground the harvest the courtiers scattered broadcast, and who starved in their very fields. This picture is also Taine's and as much a part of the Old Régime as the golden wantonness of the court.[a]

What the Old Régime Meant to the Peasant

Just a century before 1789 La Bruyère[u] wrote: "Wild animals of a certain species, male and female, are to be seen all over the country; they are dirty, livid, and sun-burned, and seem to be held in some manner to the earth which they dig with invincible obstinacy. They have an articulate voice, and when they stand upright they reveal a human countenance; they are, in fact, human beings. At night they retire into dens and subsist entirely on black bread, water, and roots. They relieve other men of the necessity of tilling, sowing, and reaping, hence deserve never to want for that bread which they have themselves produced." They do want for it, however, during the twenty-five years that follow, and they die in droves.

We calculate that in 1715 nearly a third of the whole number, six millions, perished of cold and hunger. Indeed, for the quarter of a century preceeding the Revolution, La Bruyère's picture, far from being overdrawn, falls considerably below the reality, while as a representation of the half-century before the death of Louis XV it is correct, needing to be heightened if anything, here and there, rather than subdued.

"In 1725," says Saint-Simon,[v] "while the inhabitants of Strasburg and Chantilly were in the midst of plenty, the people of Normandy lived on the grass of the fields. The first king of Europe cannot be a great king as long as his subjects are only a lot of ragamuffins of all descriptions, and his kingdom a hospital where what little the dying possess is taken from them in perfect security." During the most prosperous years of Fleury's time, and in the most fruitful portion of France the peasant is in the habit of hiding his bread and his wine, thinking himself lost if anyone suspects that he is not dying of hunger. In 1739 D'Argenson[n] writes in his journal: "The famine has been the cause of uprisings in the provinces, at Ruffec, Caen, and Chinon. Women carrying bread have been assassinated on the highways. M. le duc d'Orléans took with him the other day to the council a piece of

[1 G. Sand[l] says, "At my grandmother's, I have found portfolios full of couplets, madrigals, and ferocious satires; I have also burned verses so obscene that I could not read them to the end, written by abbés whom I knew in my childhood, or by noblemen boasting the highest birth."]

bread, which he laid on the table before the king. 'That, sire,' he said, 'is the kind of food your subjects are eating. In my district of Touraine the people, for more than a year past, have been living on grass.'"

The destitution, which is rapidly spreading on all sides, becomes more than ever the topic of conversation at Versailles. The bishop of Chartres, being questioned by the king as to the condition of his people, replied that the famine was such that "men were eating grass like sheep and dying off like flies." In 1740 Massillon, bishop of Clermont-Ferrand, writes to Fleury: "Our rural populations are in the direst poverty; they lack beds, furniture of all kinds, and, during the greater part of the year barley and oats, which are their whole sustenance, and which they are obliged to take from their own mouths and those of their children to pay the taxes. This sad spectacle is before my eyes on every one of my yearly visits. So terrible is the situation that even the negroes in our islands are better off than our own people, being able to clothe and feed their families and themselves on the proceeds of their labour, whereas our hard-working peasants cannot, by dint of the most severe and unremitting toil, earn enough to pay taxes and provide their families with bread." D'Argenson[1] relates that at Lille, in 1740, the people revolted when the grain was carried away for exportation. "More in fact live by charity than without it, and the collecting of taxes is carried on with unexampled rigour. All is taken from the peasants, their clothes, their last bucket of wheat — even the latches on their doors. In my parish, which contains but a few souls, there are more than thirty young men and women who long ago reached the marriageable age; they do not pair off together, nor is there any talk of marriage between them. Certain nobles of Touraine have told me that, wishing to give the inhabitants employment in the country, he found only a few workers in the sparsely populated districts, and these were too weak to perform manual labour. All those who are able to do so leave."

Wholesale Starvation and Revolt

"Even in Paris," continues D'Argenson, "I learn that on the day when M. le dauphin and Madame la dauphine went to Notre Dame two thousand women assembled near the bridge of la Tournelle and cried out to them as they passed: 'Give us bread or we shall starve!' One of the vicars of the parish of Ste. Marguerite assures me that more than eight hundred persons perished of hunger and cold in the faubourg St. Antoine between the 20th of January and the 20th of February; that the poor people died in their garrets without anyone to give them succour and before the priests could arrive."

These movements are the convulsive quivers of an overtaxed organism; after a fast as long as nature will allow, instinct at last asserts itself. In 1747, according to D'Argenson, there are three bread riots in Toulouse, and in Guienne they take place on every market-day. In 1750 six to seven thousand men assemble near a river in Béarn to offer resistance to the king's agents; two companies of the Artois regiment fire upon the insurgents and kill twelve of them. In 1752 there is an uprising in Rouen which lasts three days; and in Dauphiné and Auvergne the villagers storm the granaries and take from them the grain at their own price. At Arles, in the same year, two thousand armed peasants troop to the Hôtel-de-Ville to demand bread and are dispersed by the soldiers. In the province of Normandy alone uprisings take place in 1725, 1737, 1739, 1752; in 1764, 1765, 1767 and 1768, and the cause is always the same — the lack of bread. Until the very end,

at Rheims in 1770, Dijon, Versailles, St. Germain, Pontoise, and Paris in 1775, Poitiers in 1782, Aix in 1785, and Paris in 1788 and 1789, over the whole of France, in fact, such explosions are seen to occur.

Without doubt under Louis XVI the government has greatly improved, the administration has become more honest, the officials more humane, there is less inequality in the levying of taxes, and drudgery has lightened as its nature has become transformed; yet the suffering, though less intense, is still too great for human nature to endure. To anyone who reads the administrative correspondence for thirty years before the Revolution there is abundant proof that conditions are deplorable even when they do not give rise to outbreaks of revolt.

It is apparent that for the man of the people, the peasant, the artisan, the labourer, life is at best a precarious matter; he earns just the little necessary to keep off starvation — sometimes not even that little. In one place during a period covering four elections the inhabitants lived entirely on buckwheat, and for five years, apples having failed, their only drink was water. In another, the centre of a wine-growing district this time, the "growers are, for the most part, reduced to begging their bread in the dull season." Elsewhere workmen are obliged to sell their furniture and belongings, and many of them perish from cold. Disease caused by insufficient and improper food has spread abroad, and at two elections there are counted no less than thirty-five thousand people who live by alms. In one remote canton the peasants cut down the grain while it is yet green, their hunger not allowing them to wait until it ripens. It is plain that the people are living only from day to day; bread fails them utterly if the crops chance to turn out poor. Let there come but a hail-storm, a sharp frost, or an inundation, and a whole province is at a loss to know how it is going to live till the following year; in many places the rigours of an ordinary winter are enough to plunge the population in distress. It is as though a multitude of arms were raised in supplication to the king, the universal alms-giver.

The Peasant Robbed while he Starved

The decade between 1750 and 1760 is the period when the idlers and those favoured by fortune begin to look with compassion and alarm upon the workers who never dine. Why should one class of society be so desperately poor, and why in a land blessed with so fertile a soil as that of France should there be any lack of bread among the very people who grow the grain? According to the closest observers, "A full quarter of the land has gone absolutely to waste; in some portions the moors and fields of heather lie so close to each other as to make whole districts, thousands of acres in extent, resemble barren deserts."

Men stricken by poverty become hard and bitter, but when they are property owners and yet poor to desperation their mood is black indeed; indigence is an evil to which it is possible to be resigned, but no one can accept spoliation calmly. Such a property owner was the French peasant in 1789, for he had contrived somehow, all through the eighteenth century, to increase his possessions of land. That he had accomplished this in the midst of his distress is little less than a miracle, and the explanation is to be found only in the combination of qualities that go to make his character, the sobriety, tenacity, dissimulation, severity towards himself, and the passionate love of the soil that has descended to him from his fathers. Sou by sou, through years of pinching and privation, he laid by the sum in the most

secret corner of his cellar. Barefooted and with nothing but rags to cover him, he kept his heart warm with the thought of the little treasure that was to secure for him the realisation of all his hopes, and warily lay in wait for the opportunity for investment that was sooner or later certain to arise.

As long as he is merely a worker, with no other property than his pair of hands, he is in a degree exempt from taxation; but once he comes into possession of a bit of land, no matter how poor he is or may represent himself to be, he is fallen upon by the fiscal authorities to the full measure of his new liability. The collectors, peasants like himself and jealous in their character of neighbours, know exactly how much his land will bring him in, and are thus able to despoil him utterly. In vain he labours with redoubled energy; at the end of the year he finds that his hands are just as empty as before, that his field has yielded him absolutely nothing. The more he acquires and produces, the greater is the burden of imposts he has to bear. In 1715 the land-taxes and capitation borne by the peasantry alone amounted to 66,000,000 livres, in 1759 to 93,000,000, and in 1789 to 110,000,000. In 1757 the assessment is for 283,156,000 livres, in 1789 for 476,294,000.

Let us consider closely the extortions from which he suffers; they are enormous, quite beyond anything we can imagine. Against the collector and receiver he has but one resource, poverty, either real or simulated, forced or voluntary. In the provincial assembly of Berri it is said: "Every taxable peasant fears to show the extent of his possessions; he will not make full use of his furniture, his clothing, his food supplies — of anything that is likely to be seen by others." When "M. de Choiseul-Gouffier made an offer to the peasants to cover their thatched roofs with slate at his own expense," says Chamfort,[w] "they thanked him for his kindness but refused, saying that the agents would only tax them the higher for such an improvement. The peasant works, but only enough to satisfy his most immediate needs; the fear of being obliged to pay out an additional écu causes him to refrain from work that would bring him in a quadruple gain." "Hence we see nothing," said Arthur Young,[x] "but poorly fed animals, wretched tools, and neglected dunghills even among those who can afford to have better. Unrestrained spoliation carried on annually robs them of the desire to earn even a modest competency." The greater part of them, becoming weak-spirited, mistrustful, benumbed, resembling more than anything the serfs of former times, sink into a condition little better than that of the fellahs of Egypt or the toilers of Hindustan. Under a fiscal sytem so arbitrary in its methods, so enormous in its demands, acquisition is made a snare, possession a peril, and the hope of saving a delusion.

Is there any need to draw their mental portrait after the picture that has been made of their physical condition? Later their own deeds will best explain them: the movement of fury which impels them to trample to death under their wooden shoes the mayor and the adjunct they themselves have chosen, because the two unfortunate officials have, at the bidding of the national assembly, posted up the table of assessments; and the tearing to pieces in the street at Troyes of the venerable magistrate who was up to the last occupied in caring for them, and who had just made a will in their favour. From the mind, still so unformed, of the peasant of to-day, take the knowledge that has filtered in from so many sides at once — from the primary schools instituted in each village, from the conscripts returning home after service in the army, from the prodigious increase in books, newspapers, public roads, railways, and means of intercommunication of all kinds

— and you will know exactly the mental status of the peasant of those times. Shut in like his father before him in the little hamlet in which he was born and from which no road leads out into the world beyond, he has but one aim — the gaining of his daily bread and the payment of the taxes. What little mind he has is, as it were, extinguished under the weight of suffering he has endured. In very few particulars is his condition any better than that of his ox or his ass, and his ideas correspond to his condition.

How indeed should it be otherwise? Before finding lodgment in their brains every idea must assume the form of a legend, as absurd as it is easy to understand. Once bedded in this fecund, uncultivated soil, the foreign growth becomes transformed; it sends out wild shoots in all directions that bear dark foliage and poisonous fruit. On the occasion of the arrest, under Louis XV, of a band of vagabonds, some children are carried off purposely or by mistake, and the rumour at once goes round that the monarch is in the habit of taking baths of blood to restore his lost physical powers. The idea seems so probable that women, impelled by outraged maternal instinct, join in the mobs that form; and when an *exempt* is seized and maltreated one woman answers his cries for a confessor by a blow on the head with a stone, saying (and she sincerely believes she is performing but an act of justice) that he must not be allowed time to go to heaven. Under Louis XVI the people refuse to believe that the famine has not been deliberately brought about. In 1789 an officer overhears his soldiers say among themselves that "the princes and courtiers have thrown all the flour into the Seine so that the people of Paris shall starve." Asking them how it is possible for them to believe such nonsense, he receives the reply, "It is quite true, lieutenant, the bags of flour were all tied with blue ribbon." This argument was to them decisive; no reasoning could convince them of their error.

Thus in the lowest stratum of society there gradually take shape foul and horrible legends relative to the famine, the Bastille, the pleasures and extravagances of the court, in which Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, the count of Artois, Madame de Lamballe, the contractors, and all the great lords and ladies are made to play the part of ghouls and vampires. These ideas are to be seen in print in certain pamphlets of the time, and they have been abundantly pictured forth in engravings and coloured prints, which are the most effective means of propaganda, since they appeal directly to the eye.

From suspicion to hostility there is but a step. Guests arriving at a concert given in March or April, 1788, are in a state of great perturbation: "This morning the populace was assembled at the Barrière de l'Étoile, and insulted in the most frightful manner the people who were riding by in carriages to the promenade of Longchamp. Some of the wretches climbed up on the carriage steps and shouted in the faces of those inside, 'Next year we shall be riding in your carriages, and you will be trudging on foot behind.'" At the end of 1788 the stream has become a torrent, the torrent a cataract. Both the clergy and the nobility are heartily detested, and their supremacy has come to be as oppressive as a yoke. If hail or a severe frost should visit the country as in 1788; if the crops should fail, the price of bread go up to four sous a loaf, and the charity workshops be able to pay no more than twelve sous a day, are the people going to resign themselves to death by starvation? Around Rouen the forests are plundered in full day; the wood of Bagnères has been entirely cut down, and the logs sold publicly by the marauders. Famine-stricken peasants and plunderers travel in bands together, and want makes itself the accomplice of crime. The evil-

doers can be tracked from province to province by the depredations they commit along the way.

WHO SHALL GUARD THE GUARDS?

When the sedition at length grows universal, what force can prevail? Among the hundred and fifty thousand men who are to maintain order, precisely the same conditions prevail as among the twenty-six millions who are to be restrained; and the abuses, the disaffection, the numberless causes that tend to split the nation into fragments are also constantly in operation to disrupt the army. [There were sixty thousand desertions in eight years.] Out of the ninety millions that the maintenance of the army annually costs the state, forty-six millions go to the officers, and only forty-four to the men; while it is well known that by a recent ordinance only those who can prove their right to a title of nobility can be admitted to the rank of officer. In no other branch of the social organisation does the inequality against which public opinion has revolted show forth in such vivid contrasts. On the one hand are the few for whom all the honours, all the emoluments, all the leisure, all the private theatricals, all the good cheer and pleasures of this world are reserved; on the other is the great majority whose lot is enforced service, hardship, and fatigue, whose gain is six sous a day without hope of more, whose narrow bed is shared with another, whose food is that given to a dog with, latterly, the blows thrown in. Here, on this side, are ranged the highest members of the nobility, on that the lowest dregs of the populace.

For the militia only the poorest classes are available, and not a man will enter it willingly. So odious is the service to them that many take refuge in the depths of the woods, whither it is necessary to send in pursuit of them an armed force. In a certain canton which, three years later, is to furnish from fifty to a hundred volunteers a day, young men cut off their thumbs to escape conscription.

The irritation spreads and deepens; the soldiers of Rochambeau have fought side by side with the free militiamen of America and the memory is not likely to desert them. In 1788, when Dauphiné rises in revolt, Marshal de Vaux sends to the ministry the warning cry: "Impossible to count on the troops!" Four months after the opening of the states-general sixteen thousand deserters are found to be leading insurrections instead of exerting their utmost power to put them down.

France is now a whirlwind of human dust that whirls and writhes. In one great cloud it rolls at the blind impulse of the tempest.[1]

PERIOD II. THE REVOLUTIONARY EPOCH [1789–1815 A.D.]

(Comprising Chapters VII–XXII)

A PREFATORY CHARACTERISATION OF THE PERIOD

By ALFRED RAMBAUD

Member of the Institute

I. POLITICAL PROBLEMS[1]

THE Revolution burst forth, and from the outset its mission, politically speaking, was plainly revealed. It had but to make true the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen published on November 3rd, 1789, a prototype for which can be found in certain American declarations of 1776, notably that of Virginia.

To the theory of absolute monarchy formulated by Louis XIV and Bossuet was now to be opposed the new theory, "The principle of all sovereignty resides in the nation"; or in other words, national sovereignty was to succeed sovereignty by "divine right."

Louis XIV, like the Roman emperors, had believed himself above all laws because being in his own person the "living law" he alone had the right to make them. "Laws," affirms the Declaration, "are the expression of the general will; all citizens, either personally or by their representatives, are entitled to assist in their creation." Henceforth the king was to reign not "by the grace of God" alone but also "by the will of the people." Formerly absolute master over all public property, disposing freely of the state as well as of the private royal funds, he has now to conform to a "civil list" strictly made out for him by others. He can be no longer looked upon as more than the "head of the executive power," the chief magistrate of the state, as he is its first salaried servant. From subjects Frenchmen have been pro-

[1 Works for consultation: H. Taine, *Origines de la France contemporaine*, vol. ii. Thiers, Mignet, Michelet, Louis Blanc, Edgar Guinet, Aulard, etc., *Histoire de la Revolution française*. Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Revolution française*. Aug. Challamel, *Histoire de la liberté en France depuis 1789*. Innumerable Memoires and Souvenirs of which we will cite only those of Gouverneur Morris, 2 volumes, 1832. Mortimer Ternaux, *Histoire de la Terreur*. H. Wallon, *Histoire du Tribunal Revolutionnaire*. Ernest Hamel, *Histoire de Robespierre*. On Napoleon: Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat et de l'empereur*. Lanfzey, *Histoire de Napoleon*. H. Taine, *op. cit.*, vol. vi. Aucoc, *Le conseil d'Etat*. Madelin, *Le premier consul legislateur*. Perouse, *Napoleon I et les lois civiles*. D'Haussonville, *L'Eglise romaine et l'Empire*. Henri Avenal, *Histoire de la presse française depuis 1789*. Alma Sœderhjelm, *Le régime de la presse pendant la Revolution française*.

moted to the rank of citizens, pending the time when there shall be no more kings.

All forms of liberty that had been so constantly and ruthlessly suppressed under the old régime; personal liberty violated by means of the *lettres de cachet*, liberty of conscience by the persecution of Protestants and Jansenists, liberty of the press by the bonfires which had been made of condemned books and by the prison cells whither the imprudent authors had been sent to languish — every liberty was affirmed anew by the Declaration, and the same articles figured at the head of the constitution of 1791.

Inequality formed the basis of our ancient social system. There was inequality between men, some being known as "nobles," others as "roturiers" (plebeians), inequality among public officials, in the army and the high places of the church, inequality before the bar of justice — for not only were the privileged and lower classes not treated alike at the king's tribunals, but the nobility and the clergy had jurisdiction of their own; inequality in the taxation since the nobility and the clergy were practically exempt themselves while imposing lesser taxes on their fellow-citizens; inequality between the different provinces of which some had "states" and some had not; inequalities between cities, some having magistrates appointed by election and others being without the right to elect.

The Declaration abolished titles and all other hereditary distinctions; it proclaimed that all citizens were alike admissible to public office, on no other claims than those presented by their talents and ability. It also pronounced all citizens liable to assessment exactly in proportion to their means, and established their equality before the civil and penal law. Inequality between provinces disappeared with the provinces themselves which were turned into departments. All legal distinctions between cities, towns, and villages ceased, there being no longer anything but *communes*, or commonwealths, which all submitted to the same organic laws.

The work was made complete by the application of new principles in legislation, in the machinery of justice, in military organisation, and in the system of public schools and charities.

Mistakes of the Constituent Assembly

If the constituent assembly in undertaking an ecclesiastical reorganisation had been wise enough to refrain from entering the field of pure religion — as it did when it tried to restrain the bishops from demanding canonical investiture of the pope — if it had not, following the lead of Jansenists and other obstinate theologians, provoked an agitation which degenerated into civil war and aggravated the foreign war already in progress, its work, from a political and administrative point of view, might have been fairly easy of accomplishment.

But was this work a good one in itself? No, for the constituent assembly succeeded neither in creating a new power in place of the one it had cast down, nor in laying a firm foundation for liberty in France.

It had stripped the king of every prerogative recognised as essential then or since by all parliamentary constitutions, commencing with that of Great Britain. It had forbidden him active participation in the framing of the laws, and had withdrawn from him the power of absolute veto to leave him only that of a qualified (*suspensif*) veto, an act that prepared the way for perpetual conflict between the legislative assembly and the crown. The king had no longer the right to declare war, to conclude peace, or to sign

treaties; he proposed, but the assembly decreed. Neither was the nomination of bishops, judges, and army-officers left in his hands; all appointing to office, even to that of curé, became the work of the electoral body.

Heedless alike of the experience gained by Great Britain and of the wisdom recently shown by young America, the revolutionary powers placed opposite to royalty, despoiled and mutilated, a single assembly called the legislative, from the ranks of which the king was not permitted to choose his ministers, since ministers were exclusively creatures of the king and as such would be open to suspicion. Between royalty refusing to become reconciled to its fallen condition, and a single assembly over which there was no restraining authority, conflict was, in the very nature of the situation, certain to arise. The constitution of 1791 had a term of existence of only eleven months. The constituent assembly did not even succeed in organising a "cabinet government" which is the very essence of a parliamentary régime.

In administrative matters its mistakes, born of the best intentions, were no less disastrous. As politically it had rendered further reign, yes further existence for the king impossible, so administratively it set conscientiously to work to create a condition of complete anarchy.

It began by suppressing the posts of intendant and sub-delegate, thus destroying the whole royal order of financial officials, and placed the administration in the hands of bodies appointed by election to act for the department, the district, the commune. To such committees were intrusted the most vital state functions, the assessment of taxes and the levying of troops. By suppressing all the indirect imposts, the playing-card and other royal monopolies, the taxes on liquors and salt (*gabelle*), the farming of tobacco which alone brought thirty millions to the state, the constituent assembly left the state without proper means of subsistence and apparently gave no thought to making good the loss. Hence it became necessary to take the dangerous measure of fabricating assignats which were afterwards issued in ever-increasing numbers.

In return for the prerogatives of which the king had been stripped he was recognised as non-responsible, all responsibility being transferred to the ministers. The worth of this guarantee was amply demonstrated by the scaffold of the 21st of January, 1793.

The breaking down of the royal power was supposed to have laid the foundations of liberty in France, as though power and liberty were not both necessary in equal degree to a great nation! Notwithstanding its errors the work of the constituent assembly might have lasted some time in a country at peace with itself and its neighbours; but immediately anarchy and *Jacqueries* arose, and it was perceived that no one was rendering obedience to anyone else, that the marvellous machine constructed by so many thinkers who believed themselves sure of their ground was incapable of performing its functions. The situation became worse when, under the legislative, a foreign war broke out, when in February, 1793, after the execution of the king, the great European coalition was formed, and when the Vendée and thirty or forty departments rose in insurrection. The convention must secure obedience at any cost, and to gain this end it resolutely assumed powers more absolute than any wielded by Louis XIV, the Grand Turk, or the Great Mogul. It respected the work of the constituent assembly, the departments and district administrations, and the municipalities; but beside existing institutions it raised up an administrative system of its own which it called "revolutionary" and "provisory."

Work of the Convention

The convention constituted itself a vigorous executive power since it organised various committees, of which the most important was the Committee of the Public Safety, holding the full executive power of the assembly. The intendants of the old régime were replaced by special delegates sent out into the rebellious provinces, into the cities disturbed by reactionary movements, to the frontiers and among the armies. In each commune, by the side of each district assembly, the convention established national agents which it alone had the right to appoint and recall. It suppressed the departmental general councils and subordinated the former's directories. It assumed all the prerogatives of which the constituent assembly had deprived the king, and left but one-third of the public nominations to be decided by ballot. It gave out the commissions of general in the army, called by Hoche "warrants to mount the scaffold," which indeed they proved in the case of the generals Custine, Houchard, Beauharnais, Brunet, Biren, Luckner, etc.

The tribunals not performing their functions to its satisfaction, the convention established by the side of the elected judges the "revolutionary tribunals," of which the most terrible was that of Paris which pronounced 2,550 sentences of death; the revolutionary army composed of *sans-culottes* and intended to replace the royal *maréchaussée;* and the Jacobin committees which formed the police force, and conducted "Saint Guillotine" on a cart all over the country. All this machinery constituted a system of justice as repressive as that of the Turks, especially after the law of Prairial, 1794, when to be brought before any of the tribunals was equivalent to a sentence of death.

In place of the national guards of the constituent assembly and the "volunteers" of 1792 the convention instituted "forced requisition" and the levy *en masse*. Later the Directory acting on the report of General Jourdan established conscription, a system that satisfied Napoleon.

The methods of public economy practised by the convention were thoroughly revolutionary in character. To prevent the raising of prices on the necessaries of life it imposed upon merchants the *law of the maximum*. It prohibited under pain of death the exportation of grains and under pain of twenty years' imprisonment the importation, sale, or purchase of English merchandise. There being no revenue from taxes, the government in order to feed, equip, and arm its troops resorted to "requisitions," by which it seized on grains, fabrics, leathers, metals, and saltpetre wherever they could be found; it also disposed arbitrarily of all the working hands of France by shutting up old men, women, and children in the "national workshops." The Directory went still further for it established an "enforced loan" upon all rich people.

Liberty of the Press

That liberty which the constituent assembly firmly believed it had founded in France was but little enjoyed even during the relative calm of its own period. Under the convention the right of reunion became merely the right to form "popular" societies, all unions of men of moderate views being held to be conspiracies having the scaffold for their central point. After the 9th Thermidor the "moderate" side, taking its revenge, belaboured in its turn the terrified Jacobins with the rod called executive power, and brought about the closing of their clubs. Under the Directory, the law of Thermidor, year V, prohibited political associations of any kind, and Napoleon was not to be

counted on to re-establish them. Articles 291 and following of his penal code interdict all associations of more than twenty persons formed "without the consent of the government." Liberty of the press had been legally recognised under the constituent assembly, but it was not long before the revolutionists seized all the "moderate" newspapers and made bonfires of them in the street. After the fall of the monarchy, the revolutionary commune of Paris decreed on the 12th of August, 1792, that the "poisoners of public opinion should be cast into prison and their presses, type, and instruments be distributed among the patriot printers." Suleau, editor of the *Acts of the Apostles* was massacred by the populace on August 10th; du Rozoy, editor of the *Gazette de Paris* was judged, condemned to death, and executed. On the 29th of March, 1793, the convention declared subject to the pain of death any writer who should advocate the abolition of proprietary rights or the re-establishment of the monarchy. With the 31st of May and the 2nd of June, 1793, liberty had ceased to exist for the Girondins. Soon after the *Vieux Cordelier* of Camille Desmoulins was burned, and Desmoulins himself, as well as the great poet André Chénier, editor of the *Journal de Paris*, was decapitated. After the 9th Thermidor, it was the turn of the Jacobin papers to suffer oppression. Under the Directory, following upon the *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor fifty-four newspapers were suppressed and sixty-seven journalists deported.

Bonaparte, as first consul, permitted only thirteen journals to exist; when he became emperor he declared that the profession of journalism was a public function and re-established the censorship of the old régime. For the surviving newspapers he arrogated to himself the right of naming and revoking journalists and caused the oath of allegiance to be sworn to him by the printers. In 1811 he suppressed all the newspapers except four, originally intending to leave in existence only one, the *Moniteur*. A favourite remark of his was, "I am a child of the people and do not wish to be insulted like a king."

During the period extending from 1789 to 1815 France cannot be said to have had either liberty or constitution, since the constitution formulated in 1791, which instituted the legislative assembly, remained valid less than a year. The convention being a constituent assembly, voted two widely different constitutions, that of 1793, wildly demagogic, which was never made to serve, and that of the year III (1795). The latter accorded the right of suffrage in a superior degree — which was alone effective — only to citizens who possessed property yielding a revenue equal to that produced by a hundred and fifty or two hundred days' labour; and while pretending to respect the right of the people to vote, it in reality imposed great curtailment upon the mass of poor electors. It placed the executive power in the hands of five directors, and divided the legislative power, having learned wisdom by the unfortunate experience of the constitution of 1791, between two separate councils; that of the *anciens* and that of the Five Hundred. The period of the Directory up to its close with the *coup d'état* of Napoleon, on the 18th Brumaire, 1799, was marked by a series of *coups d'état*, occurring on the 18th Fructidor, 22nd Floreal, and 30th Prairial.

The convention, to sum up, gave France despotism exercised by an assembly. The government of Napoleon, whether consulate or empire, notwithstanding the constitutions of the years 8, 10, 12, etc., its republican features and popular aspects, its *plebiscites* and consul-senators, can be fitly characterised only by two words: military despotism. In it was exemplified the absolute power of the ancient Cæsars.

The Despotism of Napoleon

Napoleon recovered all the prerogatives that had been taken from the king; the right to make war and peace, to appoint bishops, magistrates, officers and functionaries of all kinds. He re-established the ancient system of administrative jurisdiction, and instituted in each department a *conseil de préfecture* with the *conseil d'état* at the head of all. By article 75 of the constitution of the year 8 he made public functionaries exempt from the judgment of ordinary tribunals. He appointed prefects and sub-prefects, in whom were revived the intendants and sub-delegates of former times; he chose mayors and adjuncts, and selected almost all the members of the general councils in districts and cities. He placed the prefects in charge of levying the troops, and the raising of contributions was entrusted to a whole hierarchy of financial functionaries.

After having created the state council, the senate, the legislative body (corps legislatif), and the tribunate, he made of the first the pivot of the Napoleonic rule, suppressed the fourth in 1807 as being too independent, and reduced the second and third to the condition of being merely chambers of registry for his will. On his own unsupported authority he regulated by decrees the budget of 1813, and ordered fresh levies of troops. Of what consequence beside him, who had been rendered three times sacred by the plebiscite, the expression of the national will, were any number of deputies appointed after the most extraordinary proceedings by a handful of electors united in a district or department college, who no longer had the least connection with any other electoral body? What did a deputy represent? A small division of territory, nothing more. The emperor, on the contrary, could lay claim to having received from the totality of the sovereign people the sovereign power. Like the Cæsars of Rome he was the "nation" incarnate.

We have seen how fared freedom of the press and freedom of association under Napoleon; other liberties and guarantees were no more faithfully observed. In 1805 he suspended the functions of the jury in cases of high treason, which was virtually a return to trial by "commission" as practised under Richelieu and Louis XIV. In 1813 he annulled a decision rendered by the jury at Antwerp, and summoned both jury and accused to appear before another court. His decree issued in 1810 concerning state prisons, where it was possible to be confined without legal judgment, recalls the period when *lettres de cachet* were in full vigour. The constituent assembly had abolished confiscation, a penalty often disproportionate to the fault and falling most heavily on the children of the condemned; Napoleon maintained it after it had been re-established by the convention. A certain house, belonging to the father of the poet Lemercier, being needed for the widening of the rue de Rivoli, Napoleon had it demolished and then refused to pay indemnity. The story reflects less credit on him than did that of the miller of Sans Souci on Frederick II.

In the Concordat Napoleon became the restorer of the Catholic faith, and in the *organic articles* the legislator of all forms of worship; whereby it cannot be denied that he rendered a great service to a country afflicted as this had been by religious persecutions. It is plainly to be seen, however, that he also wished to make of the church an *instrumentum regni*. He imposed upon it a certain catechism wherein the duties of Christians towards "Napoleon I, our emperor," were vigorously set forth. He was fond of speaking of "my bishops," "my gendarmes," and he introduced into the

church calendar a new saint-day, that of Saint Napoleon, — the 15th of August. After this, in 1808, we find him offering grave offence to Catholics by abducting Pope Pius VII and detaining him a prisoner at Fontainebleau; by uniting to his empire, which was already so vast, the Roman states; and by bestowing, three years later, the title of King of Rome upon his new-born son.

His system of customs exceeded in rigour that of the convention, and was later to terminate in the gigantic folly of the European blockade. He had also re-established all the earlier indirect imposts under the name of "united duties," had restored to the state its monopoly in tobacco and other products, but had retained the fiscal inventions of the Directory such as the tax on doors and windows.

Napoleon, the former *sans-culottes* officer and Jacobin general, the friend of the brothers Robespierre, seemed to have forgotten all the principles of democracy he had once imbibed. He drew to his court the aristocracy of the old régime, and brought into being an imperial nobility of his own whose titles were derived from victories, or the names of conquered towns. He created not only barons, counts, dukes, and princes, but kings as well: setting his brother Joseph on the thrones of Naples and of Spain, his brother Louis on that of Holland, raising a kingdom in Westphalia for his brother Jerome, making his sisters reigning duchesses, his brother-in-law, Murat, king of Naples, and his son-in-law, Eugène Beauharnais, viceroy of Italy. He formed a court for himself of the highest dignitaries, marshals, and ministers attired in silks and gold, and his own sword-hilt was adorned with the famous diamond called the Regent's.

Napoleon had so despotically forced his way into a position where he could dominate not France alone but the other European powers that he was free to undertake at his will expeditions into Spain and Russia, and there leave the greater part of his armies. He reigned by grace of the victories he achieved, but all glory fell from him when success began to desert him, and his doom was sealed by the silent voices in the Senate and Chamber of 1814 and 1815.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS[1]

The only task in which the revolutionary assemblies can be said to have fully succeeded was the solution after many vain attempts of the social question, which, as we have said, was almost wholly an agrarian question.

During the year 1789 there succeeded each other in Paris the initial events of the great drama that was about to be enacted, the oath of the Jeu de Paume (tennis-court), the royal sitting of the 23rd of June, and the taking of the Bastille. But under the revolution that had Paris for its scene was a second one kindling, spreading, leaping into flame — the revolution of the peasantry. King and assembly might enter into conflict and become reconciled, new legislators might soar into the region of pure abstractions and talk grandly of liberty, equality, fraternity, justice; the true significance of the situation lay in this, that "Jacques Bonhomme" had at last risen to his full stature on his wooden-shod feet. In July it was learned at Paris that everywhere chateaux were being burned, and with them the seignorial archives wherein were kept the titles by the aid of which the intendants of the nobles made the peasants give up their money. Almost all local histories

[1] Works to be consulted already cited above, p. 191.

of the Revolution[1] have described the singular panic caused by the alarm of brigands, raised once and never repeated, that placed arms in the hands of peasants from one end to the other of the country.

In some localities the peasants set fire to the man of business and his papers together to make him confess where certain deeds were hidden. Everything that was nearly or remotely connected with the nobility, every act however insignificant in itself that seemed to conflict with the doctrine of equality, gave rise to excesses that were given the name of reprisals by the insurgents. The latter caused to be delivered up to them the weather-vanes that only the owners of castles had a right to possess, and these trophies they fastened to the tops of "liberty poles" which they had everywhere erected. They seized and carried away the contents of granaries and cellars, claiming that they were thus simply regaining possession of their own wheat and wine. They cut down what trees they wanted in the noble's wood, and removed his carved bench (banc d'œuvre) from the parish church. As for the noble's exclusive right to fish, hunt, and keep pigeons and rabbits, armed bands of peasants went about emptying all the streams and warrens, while others entered the very courts of the castles and shot all the pigeons that were to be seen. Louis XVI, the impassioned hunter, was obliged to listen for several days to the noise of shooting in his park, where stags, hinds, wild boars, and hares were brought down by thousands. In some places the rioters, to exercise and confirm the new principles of equality, forced the former noble to extend to them his hand in greeting, or the lady of the castle to bestow upon them a kiss. The surprise of all these terrible scenes might have been spared the nobility, the clergy, and the new legislators if they had taken the trouble to glance over the rural registers of 1789.

The parish records, the contents of which rarely entered into the general reports drawn up in cities, have been preserved in the national archives. "Side by side with handsomely transcribed copies of leases bound in fine registers, they stand, and the dingy bands which hold them together, the coarse paper, scribbled over with innumerable rustic signatures on which they are made out, give an exact idea of the conditions and people they represent. On the margins of the stately registers is written what was supposed to be a complete political constitution, but one that has never been brought into effect; whereas those sordid pages inscribed by peasants changed the face of the world in a few days."[2]

The "privileged classes," that is the clergy and the nobility, which formed half of the national assembly, took the news of pillaging and burning very much to heart. The same may be said of a great number among the representatives of the Third Estate (Tiers État) some of whom had acquired the lands of nobles and exercised seignorial rights, while others, procureurs, lawyers, country judges and business agents were what were called at the time "seignorial *valets*."

Sacrifices of the Nobility and Clergy

On the third of August the count of Clermont-Tonnerre read before the assembly a report describing the recent events. The peasants affected to believe that they had acted under the orders of the king and displayed "deep sympathy for the kind masters whom imperative commands had obliged them to harm."

[1] A very curious book of this nature has recently appeared; Georges Bussière, *Études historiques sur les révolutions en Périgord.*

[2] Doniol, *La Révolution française, et la féodalité*, chapter IX.

Obeying the impulse given by a party of nobles wiser and more liberal than the rest, the national assembly in a unanimous movement of generosity voted during the night of the 4th of August the abolition of the feudal régime. But the most difficult remained to be accomplished; France had seen so much agitation on the subject of feudalism, so much had been written, said, and argued about fiefs, feudal rights, *seigneuriaux*, and *domaniaux* and the "feudal" lawyers had shown themselves such wells of knowledge that the whole matter was plunged in deep obscurity. Moreover it was not merely a conflict of doctrines that was certain to ensue; personal interests were also involved, and the bitterness shown in equal degrees by proprietors and financiers would prevent truth and equity from ever coming to the light.

At least one good result was obtained, a decree issued on the 12th of August which abolished without indemnity ecclesiastical tithes. Thus a gift of 123 million was made to the taxpayers without distinction between rich and poor, while the state undertook to maintain the clergy and all the institutions of worship on funds that it did not possess. The peasants were gainers to the extent of 100 millions more by the abolition of ecclesiastical seignorial rights. The clergy had become the target upon which the shots of all parties were directed. By the decree of November 2nd its immense estates were given over to be disposed of by the nation, and were again immediately placed on sale, the French peasant being thus afforded another occasion of widening the boundaries of his land.[1]

Seignorial Rights

Infinitely more complicated than the questions of church tithes or church property was that of seignorial rights.

The constituent assembly had deemed it wise to establish a distinction between the rights which were handed down as a relic of ancient rural servitude and those which might be freely granted, as in any other contract, between ci-devant noble and ci-devant tenant. Thus there came to be two separate categories of rights or claims; those formulated by the feudality of domination and those appertaining to the feudality of contracts. It was the first alone that were abolished.

Thus servitude became a thing of the past, together with the exclusive right of hunting, fishing, and maintaining pigeons; with the tax on legacies and unclaimed heritages, on strangers dying within the seigneury, on bastards and on wreckage on the shores; with the special tax and hours of labour due the noble, the banalités, or payment for the use of mill, oven, and wine-press, and the toll on roads, bridges, and market-places. All these

[1] We must not, however, exaggerate the share taken in these sales of ecclesiastical property to the peasants who ordinarily had little money either in coin or assignats, and who preserved certain scruples of conscience which made the purchase of such estates seem to them a sort of sacrilege. Monks and curés, moreover, never ceased reminding them that property so obtained must one day be returned. The parties who chiefly profited were the syndicates of buyers called "black bands" which broke up the great domains and resold them in little bits, and the bourgeois of cities and lesser towns who presented themselves with coins or assignats in hand and a total absence of religious scruples.

A recent study of M. G. Lecarpentier, *La propriété foncière de la clergé, et la vente des biens ecclésiastiques dans la Seine supérieure* (Paris et Rouen, 1901) throws great light on the subject; in the district of Caudebec more than half of the land either became part of the urban municipalities or passed into the hands of citizens, such as lawyers, merchants, etc. To those who deplore the small number of purchasers that offered for the church domains Mirabeau replied, "What does it matter to us? If no one buys them we shall give them away!" After 1793 the convention was forced to divide up the property to be sold in small lots for the benefit of the peasant.

formed the oddest, most picturesque, and archaic features of the system in question, but they were by no means the most important from a financial point of view.

On the contrary the *cens* or seignorial rents were left intact, as also the *lods et ventes* granting their possessor the privilege of redemption. It is possible that these claims proceeded from the "contract-feudalism," but the peasant was of the opinion that it would not result in gain to him to pay in ground-tax what he had formerly been obliged to yield over as *feudal dues*. The maintenance of *lods et ventes* when a mutation tax had already been established by the king was wholly unjustifiable. Indeed the rural inhabitant refused utterly to satisfy this claim unless the ci-devant noble could produce written proof that it had been granted to him freely, and even then a radical means of making such proofs disappear had been found in the burning of châteaux.

As soon as the peasant conceived the idea that the deputies appointed by him were not defending his rights with sufficient vigour, a new jacquerie arose in several provinces, with wholesale burning of châteaux and murder of nobles when necessary. Taine has calculated that from July 1789 until the dissolution of the constituent assembly no less than five jacqueries, involving the eruption of several whole provinces took place; and even in the time of the legislative assembly the fermentation had not entirely subsided.

English and French Agrarian Laws

If the agrarian laws framed by the constituent assembly had remained in force the French peasant would have found himself in a position similar to that of the English agriculturist of to-day. Agrarian reform was not really accomplished in Great Britain until 1835, the fifth year of the reign of William IV. The people gained little by having waited so long. Brought about pacifically, without the aid of jacqueries and popular uprisings the reform was effected with the consent of all parties interested, and in accordance with laws that had been given long deliberation in both chambers. In no way abolished, the tithe to the church was simply transformed into an impost fixed under the authority of special commissioners (Tithe Commissioners) and all persons liable were left absolutely free to do as they chose about redemption. Nevertheless a burden of many millions continued to weigh upon the English taxpayers.

The manor was no more inclined than the church to allow itself to be despoiled. Depending on the seigneury more in a measure than the peasant of France, the English peasant had no other title-deeds to his tenure or copyhold than an inscription on the "roll" of the manor. As in France he paid yearly rental, or *cens*, fines, different mutation dues, of which one was called "decease money," a ground-rent which represented the obligations formerly imposed by the Norman conquerors on the Celtic or Anglo-Saxon serfs, and lastly he was obliged to render certain stated hours of service. In many localities the forest was the property of the lord, and cutting down the trees was punishable with a fine. Any departure from the customs of the manor, all innovations, such as the planting or removal of a hedge without the authorisation of the landlord, who was the "superior" proprietor, might entail confiscation pure and simple, or, at the very least a heavy fine. In certain manors the lord had a right to claim, on the death of the copyholder, the best beast in the latter's stables, or his finest piece of furniture. This was called right of *heriot*.

Such a system was still more intolerable in England than in France for in proportion as methods in agriculture improved the restrictions placed on the freedom of the copyholder became more and more irritating and oppressive. There had recently sprung up, moreover, on arable or prairie lands that had formerly been copyholds, whole cities or quarters of cities, as for example Brighton, and the newest part of London. The lord thus became chief owner of a great number of fine mansions and houses of trade; and it was upon the flourishing industries of the country, upon the manufacturers, traders, ship-builders, that the rule of the "manor" was now to press with the full weight of its vexations and injustice. The lord who was formerly owner of a piece of land worth 30 livres shortly saw buildings erected upon it to the value of 200,000 livres, and the soil which had once yielded sustenance for a bare half dozen sheep was made to bring him in a profit of thousands. It was to enrich him who was already so wealthy, and whose days were passed in idleness that the expert agriculturist in the country and the ingenious architect, the prosperous merchant and the bold speculator in the city, performed marvels of intelligence and skill. Manor rule applied to the new England that was rising up became a crying iniquity; where he had before taken an ass or a cow on the decease of one of his poor tenants to satisfy his claim of heriot, the lord could now seize, from the estate of an opulent sub-proprietor, a priceless painting, an historic diamond, or a race-horse bearing a name celebrated all over the world.

Detestable as may have been the former English system — worse in many respects than that of France — it was destined to survive the latter by fifty or sixty years, and when the change finally came it was more in the nature of an attenuation than of a suppression. The law of 1841 empowered the tithe commissioners (now tithe and copyhold commissioners) to preside over the negotiations between landlord and tenant. According to the same law three different methods of arrangement were possible: commutation or substitution of reduced and non-variable fines for the old variable and arbitrary rentals; enfranchisement, or rather suppression of the copyhold and its replacement by any terms that might be acceptable to the chief proprietor; and lastly certain simple amendments to the manorial system as it then stood. The first expedient seemed the easiest and the one most likely to give satisfaction to all the parties concerned.

The right of ransom was left subject to the will of the landlords. Their exactions were most severe. In 1848 the commissioners made the declaration that unless a law was passed which increased their powers there would shortly be no need of their services, as parties had almost ceased to present themselves before them.

The new laws passed in answer to this appeal were those of 1852 and 1858; the first obliged the landlord to enfranchise all copyholds against an indemnity in rent or capital; still his consent remained necessary to any curtailment of his right of fishing and hunting which he everywhere retained. The second law had merely to suppress certain useless hindrances, and to codify all the rules in the matter. These proceedings marked the close of the manorial régime.

In whatever direction the new legislation of Great Britain made itself felt it tended toward the same result, namely, ransom or readjustment, not abolition. Not without making compensation in other ways did the yeoman cease paying tithes to the church and seignorial and proprietary taxes to the landlord; the only evils of the old system to be completely abolished were those that were the most intolerable.

Almost analogous to this, leaving out the question of tithes, would have been the situation of the French peasant if the agrarian laws of the constituent assembly had remained in operation. The universal feeling was such in France, however, toward the close of 1791 that a pause could not have been made at this point. The conflict between the classes had broken out when indignation against the king was at its height, and religious discords, the bluster of nobles who had taken refuge in other lands, and the imminence of a European coalition, put the finishing touch to the popular exasperation. In France the agrarian revolution was consummated in the midst of civil and on the eve of foreign war; while in England the reform had come about under peaceful conditions, as the result of a series of acts looked upon as purely business measures, having no connection with politics.

End of Feudalism

In France, while the Jacqueries were carrying on a "propaganda by deed" the revolutionary agrarian doctrines were assuming final shape; over against the "rights of nobles" were reared in threatening array the "rights of villeins." The conviction was soon reached that never could feudalism be made *contractante*, it must always remain not only *dominante* but cruelly oppressive as well. Moreover it was very necessary to decide just what revenues the nobles were to be allowed to retain. An old law of the monarchy which decreed confiscation of the estates of persons guilty of high treason, was revived and put in practice against emigrants, scarcely any distinction being made between emigrants who had actually carried arms against France, and those who had merely taken refuge in a foreign land. Nevertheless the manner in which those nobles who had remained at home were treated by the Jacobin committees of their village or of the neighbouring town was such as to turn almost every "ci-devant" into an emigrant. Thus a prodigious number of seignorial estates were turned in with the lands of the clergy to swell the national domains. These estates the peasant could now make his own if he so desired, paying for them in assignats that had already greatly depreciated, and were soon to fall to a hundredth part of their face value.

The assembly which was to take away the property of the nobles as its predecessor had taken away that of the clergy was elected, not by universal suffrage which never came into operation during the whole course of the Revolution, but by an electoral body of which each member paid a sum equivalent to the proceeds of three days' labour. Four million two hundred and ninety-eight thousand three hundred and sixty "active" citizens composed this body which was sufficiently large to be an exact representative of the popular spirit; had it contained more members its action might not have been so energetic. It elected an assembly exactly after its own image, the legislative. It was this assembly that was to take the most rigorous measures against the nobility and clergy, to precipitate the fall of royalty, to commence the foreign war that was to react so disastrously on France, to regulate, lastly, the agrarian question and make an end of the "seigneury" for all time.

By its edict of the 18th of June, 1792, the legislative assembly declared abolished without possibility of redemption all rights of whatever denomination — the denominations varied according to the province — based on the mutations that might arise in the possession of property or of funds. This was equivalent to the suppression of all seignorial rights of mutation.

The assembly recognised the validity of certain *casual* claims which might exist by reason of a sale or concession freely agreed to by the former owner; but only on condition that the latter or his representatives could furnish proof of there having been a contract. Now proof of this kind could rarely be produced, hence the victory was nearly always on the side of the peasant.

The legislative assembly also abolished a certain number of *banalités* that the constituent assembly had allowed to remain in force because they were looked upon as payment for certain services the noble had rendered to the village.

The convention took still more radical measures. It abolished the *casual rights* that its predecessor had respected. There was no longer any question of trying to determine just what were the rights of the noble and what were the rights of the peasant; the convention denied all rights whatever to the noble, even the right to exist. Only by the total destruction of the aristocracy, by the absolute triumph of democratic principles in all the rural districts, could the Revolution be made complete and lasting. Of feudalism the name, even the very memory was to be destroyed. The assembly ordained that all papers belonging to the châteaux should be deposited in the municipal record offices, and there "burned in the presence of the municipal council and all the citizens." Isolated acts of violence, of brutal retaliation on the part of the peasants, that had hitherto been denounced and perhaps punished when circumstances permitted, were now declared to be strictly legal. Feudalism was to be hunted down wherever it existed, beyond the boundaries of France, across the seas. "The national convention decrees that no person of French birth can claim feudal rights or service in any quarter whatsoever of the globe, under pain of civil degradation" (7th of September, 1793). This meant utter ruin to French colonial property-owners in the Antilles, the Isles of France and of Bourbon.

The work is at last accomplished; there no longer remains in France a trace of feudal dominion. The legislative assembly and the convention have been partial even to the point of flagrant injustice in favour of the peasant and against the noble. The result was the creation of a rural democracy, absolved by the Revolution from the necessity of paying tithes and seignorial dues that would aggregate several hundreds of millions, and made possessor of immense "national domains," which has become the most influential factor in national affairs that exists in the world to-day.

The lawyer Mailhe, a learned *feudalist* and deputy to the legislative assembly from Haute-Garonne, was neither a Jacobin nor a collectivist, yet this is what he said about seignorial rights: "If their suppression in reality covered an attack on all proprietary rights, the assembly which issued the decree would be blessed by ninety-nine hundredths of the nation." The question of seignorial rights was treated both by the legislative assembly and the convention, not as a litigation between compatriots and fellow-citizens, but as a *casus belli* that had to be decided between two hostile castes — almost two hostile nations.

Virtually the whole of the social question lay at that epoch in the agrarian question, there being, properly speaking, no question of labour. The law of March, 1791, suppressed all corporations and trades unions with their syndics, committees, and rules, and it was believed that thereby liberty had been permanently founded in every department of labour; pharmacy and the trade of silversmith alone excepted. So little did the assembly foresee any great development of industries in France that by the law of July, 1791, it

decided that no blast furnaces could be manufactured without the authorisation of a special law. It was not long thereafter before the emigration of the rich, the excesses committed by the lower classes, the "requisitions;" the law of maximum, and civil war had destroyed what little industry and commerce still subsisted in France. The cruelties of the Lyons revolt in 1793 decimated the population of that city and closed all its silk factories.

The constituent assembly in suppressing corporations had no intention of allowing them to reorganise at some future time. By the law of June 14th, 1791, it prohibited all associations and coalitions of working people formed with the object of raising funds for mutual support, or obtaining an increase in wages; and punished delinquents with fine and imprisonment. In his report the deputy, Chaspelier, justified these prohibitions by arguments drawn from a most astonishing tissue of sophistries, "Without doubt," he said, "all citizens should be allowed to assemble; but citizens belonging to certain professions should be prohibited from assembling in their own interest, since the state is able and willing to furnish work for those who subsist by it, and support for the infirm." Thus the constituent assembly, embracing in its distrust of labour organisations the dangerous utopian theory of every man's "right to work," tumbled finally into the pitfall of "state socialism."

Napoleon, in his law of 1803, prohibited labour coalitions held with a view to arranging strikes. In article 414 and following of his Penal Code he makes a greater show of justice by accompanying his prohibition of labour coalitions with similar restrictions upon manufacturers; but this can be nothing but a feint, since manufacturers have no need to assemble noisily for the purpose of deciding their affairs. In article 1781 of his Civil Code Napoleon manifests great partiality for the employer, whose word is not to be questioned in matters pertaining to the amount of wages paid, the salary list of the previous year or the estimates for the current year. In 1805 the employé was obliged to provide himself with a *livret* (small book or certificate), that was to be left in the hands of the employer, who was thus given complete control over the employé.

Nevertheless the working classes should be grateful to Napoleon for having given them the first law establishing trade councils (*Conseils de Prud'homme*), and also for prompt and inexpensive jurisdiction (law of the 18th of March, 1806). This law was later modified in a sense even more favourable to the workingman.

Social Metamorphosis

The social transformation that took place in France during the period of the Revolution can be followed in all its phases. Before 1789 there had existed "privileged classes," that refused to bear any share of the public burden on the pretext that the clergy aided the state by its prayers, and the nobility by its sword. Now privileges and privileged classes have both disappeared. The clergy has ceased to form a distinct order, the first of the state; the decree of the 12th of August, 1789, has deprived it of its revenues, the tithes; that of the 2nd of November has robbed it of its lands; the congregations, that second and richer half of the ecclesiastical body, have been dissolved. The secular clergy has been made a mere collection of salaried officials, having no corporate place in the nation.

Civil acts are taken out of the hands of the clergy and placed in those of municipal officers, and religious marriage is subordinated to civil marriage.

Protestants have been emancipated, also Jews; everywhere freedom of conscience has been proclaimed, a privilege that the clergy will soon have to claim in its own behalf, as its civil constitution, in the effort to make it independent of the spiritual authority of Rome, has placed it in a position where it will have to choose between persecution and schism. The enactments that follow fall so heavily upon "refractory" priests or those who are not "sworn in" as to deliver them over to the massacres of September, 1792, to death by drowning in the Loire at the hands of the ferocious Carrier, to the tumbrils of the guillotine and the bloody-thirsty humours of the populace.

The night of the 4th of August also dealt the death blow to the nobility as second order of the state. It has been seen what became of seignorial revenues and, after the emigration, of the great landed estates. The aristocracy has been shorn of its honours in the village church, has been stripped of those rights which it valued highest. It is no longer necessary to belong to the nobility in order to attain to the exercise of the highest state functions, or to fill the positions of greatest dignity in the church, the magistracy, and the army; on the contrary such an accident of birth is a decided disadvantage. There is no longer a court where the noble, ruined by the Revolution, can seek consolation in honorary privileges, or can solicit the "special favour" of the king; there remains no place open to him in the entire country. Moreover, not only does the nobility not exist, but the law declaring that children shall inherit equally and limiting the right of making wills renders the exercise of the right of primogeniture, and the consequent reconstruction of the old domains, an impossibility for the future.

The terror caused by the Revolution is everywhere increased by local anarchy; there is violence above and violence below. Who can doubt that the morrow has arrived of the humanitarian prophecies of a Voltaire, a Rousseau, an Abbé de Saint Pierre; of the sentimentalities of a Beaumarchais and of the virile philanthropy of a Turgot? The drama has followed upon the idyl. "The Revolution, prepared by the most civilised classes of the nation," says De Tocqueville, "passed for execution into the hands of the roughest and least cultured."

CHAPTER VII

THE REVOLUTION UNDER MIRABEAU

[1789–1791 A.D.]

THERE is no scene, no portion of history, that can be regarded under so many different views as the revolution upon which we now enter. To some, it is all crime; to others, all glory. In England, the prevailing sentiment has been, to regard the French nation, as if it were an individual actuated by one perverse will, and flinging itself, from pure love of mischief, into the agonies of suffering and the depths of crime.

But revolution is one of the maladies of kingdoms, or rather the crisis of malady. It may proceed from some latent vice in the constitution, from dissipation, from mismanagement. To avert such is often no more in the power of the nation or of the individual than it is to be all-sound and all-wise. From early times there was something wrong in the framework of French society. These defects have been noted; above all, that marked division of classes which refused amalgamation. Their mutual and oft-renewed struggles have been seen. The people, the great mass, not of the poor and ignorant, but often of the wealthy and enlightened, were conquered and borne down in the combat. Their defeat they could have forgiven; but the extravagant use which the upper classes had made of their victory revolted the fallen. The clergy grasped one-third of the lands of the kingdom, the noblesse another; yet the remaining third was burdened with all the expense of government. This was reversing the social pyramid, and placing it upon its apex.

To reform this state of things was necessary. Flesh and blood could not bear it. Intellect, more powerful still, rebelled against it. Owing to the great exertions for the latter in print and orally, all men were agreed as to the necessity of this change. Louis XVI, however uneducated, felt and owned the need; but he was at first young, weak because ignorant, and dared not to break through the trammels of a court. The monarch, nevertheless,

[1789 A.D.]

made every effort to bring about the desired reform peaceably. He intrusted the task first to Turgot, whose schemes were repulsed by the magistracy. Necker made no political attempt. Calonne tried next. He was defeated and overthrown by the clergy and the noblesse. Brienne then was driven to repeat the attempt, and the magistracy tripped him up. What resource was left? To recur to the people. But this was revolution. True! but who rendered it indispensable? Not the people, who were all the time tranquil; not the monarch, who did his utmost; not the queen, despite the accusation that even respectable writers echo — we find her supporting Necker and approving the double representation of the commons. No; it was the resistance, the false, the blind resistance of the privileged orders — noblesse, clergy, magistracy — that precipitated the Revolution, and flung all power at last into the hands of the commons.

In the great English rebellion, the peerage was not destroyed — it fell. There was none of the hatred towards it which the French noblesse had excited in the people; still, it fell. From the same law, it might be argued that in the general wreck of the social system, which was now inevitable in France, the opportunities for repairing and saving it being voluntarily lost, the members of the privileged classes could survive but as individuals, and hold influence but by their talents and character, not their rank.

This is the law of every revolution in which the people are called to partake.[1] Some argue, might not the Revolution have been brought about amicably, with forbearance and mutual sacrifice? Certainly not: it was too late. The changes which even the monarch himself allowed as necessary to be effected were too radical, too great, to be wrought by aught save force. What centuries ought to have gradually done, was here given as the work of a day. Such a task was too great, too momentous, and the time allowed too short, to permit of its accomplishment by aught short of convulsion. With never so little of fatalism in one's creed, much of that stern principle must be seen linking together and impelling the events of this dire catastrophe. The distressed condition of the peasantry had swelled their disorderly ranks, in which were found those ardent tempers which war occupies and mows down, and who in long intervals of peace roam unquiet and eager for their natural element of strife. Famine, occasioned by the failure of the last crop, rendered more severe by an inclement winter, sharpened the ferocity of this class; whilst its hordes were increased by the efforts of the benevolent, chiefly exerted in the capital, whither the indigent flocked in consequence.[b]

SOREL ON THE SPIRIT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

"The national assembly," wrote Mirabeau, "has contracted the habit of acting in the same way as the people whom it represents, by actions which are always abrupt, always passionate, always precipitate." The assembly itself formed a people, and a people in revolt. Elected by a sort of public acclamation, it was a reflection of the nation's own character, and presented a faithful likeness of France. The nation possessed a very clear idea of the civil reforms it demanded, and a very determined will to accomplish them; only on the subject of political reforms it had but vague aspirations and inconsistent plans. Civil liberty had taken the place of morality, and nothing contributed more than that to render unendurable a government that had banished from it all laws.

[1] The revolution of 1830 offers another exemplification of this important truth.

The feudal rights were abolished in a night, and it became evident, after that particular night, that France would rise up against whosoever should desire to restore them. Political liberty was an innovation. It was contrary to all precedents. The notion could be instilled into the minds of the people only by upsetting all their acquired ideas, and before it could be established the foundations of the state must be relaid. To put it into practice it was necessary to change the previous customs and modify them to conform to the instincts of the people.

Each one invented for himself an abstract ideal; no one had gained knowledge of it through experience. One heard only the sovereignty of the people proclaimed, and a determination to sweep away everything that appeared in the shape of an obstacle. But the old régime being the only one of which the French had any knowledge, when it had vanished there was nothing to fill its place. Instead of the liberty for which they were waiting, it was anarchy that they saw appear. Anarchy sprang out of those causes which rendered the Revolution inevitable.

It is not through revolution that a government is destroyed, it is because the government is destroyed that revolution is triumphant. From the first outset of the disturbance, the agents of the state, distracted, bewildered, with no one to direct them or uphold them, were reduced to play the part of victims, or to be passive witnesses of the excesses of the populace. The convocation of the states was only a solemn admission of the utter powerlessness of the government. The ministry failed in the task, and succumbed beneath the heavy burden. Neither did the chiefs know how to command, nor the subordinates to obey. The administration itself vanished; the army melted away. Nothing was left of the formidable ruling instrument which was forged by Richelieu and brought to perfection by Louis XIV, but an inert and spiritless body, which stifled every attempt of those who tried to direct it. But all France knew that royalty could no longer contend against it. The assembly could rule no better. It showed itself by inexperience, by presumption, by idealism, as improvident and incapable of governing as the monarchy had become through routine and decrepitude. Their suspicions of the crown made the deputies snatch from it all power; their very idea of the principle of power forbade them to exercise it.

The new government found itself in a very short time reduced to the same extremity as the old. The ministry was dominated by the assembly, the assembly by the clubs, the clubs were ruled by the demagogues, and the demagogues by the armed populace, fanatical and famished, which they believed followed in their train, and which in reality drove them in front of it. This terrible driving commenced July 14th; it struck the first blow by breaking in the door of the Bastille, and showed to the nation the impotence of the monarchy. The days of October were only the outcome of it.

THE MISTAKE OF THE ÉMIGRÉS

The king was a prisoner in his capital, and a captive in his palace. He still had servants, but he no longer had a court. The 18th of July, his younger brother, the count of Artois, his cousins, the prince of Condé, the duke de Bourbon, and the duke d' Enghien, hurriedly left France. In consequence of the uprising of the peasants that broke out in the country districts, the smaller nobility took refuge in the towns, the nobility of the court withdrew to foreign parts. After the 6th of October the leaders of the right side, Lally Tollendal, Bergasse, and 120 deputies who voted with them, left the

assembly and gave up the struggle. A new wave of *émigrés* crossed the frontier, and from that time it did not cease.

Those who thus left the kingdom were not the victims, they were the malcontents. They left, far less to flee from peril than to get ready for revenge. They did not present themselves in the little courts which received them in Savoy and upon the Rhine as fugitives who sought a refuge, but as a political party which sought allies. They declared that there was no other remedy in this crisis of the French monarchy than a complete counter-revolution, the punishment of the rebels, the abolition of seditious laws, the restoration of the king in the fulness of his authority, that of the nobility in the fulness of their privileges, and finally the re-establishment pure and simple of the old régime in the state and the feudal régime in society. They had abandoned their party only to serve it more surely, they had left the field open to the Revolution only to reverse the state of affairs and finally to crush it out.

A Street Costume, Last Part of Eighteenth Century

They proclaimed these plans, they caballed for the great day, and conspired with as much display as futility for the invasion and conquest of their country. The rumours that they themselves spread of their armaments, of their plots, and their alliances, their pride, their tone of command and of threat, gave credit to the idea that their return would be followed by an entire overthrowal of men and conditions. The people took literally their comminatory diatribes; they trembled for the rights they had won for themselves, they turned with fury against those who were accused of wishing to snatch them from them. Their anger fell upon the court and upon the nobles remaining in France. They accused them of being the accomplices of the *émigrés*. This first emigration, entirely political and feudal, the most absurd and fatal of the anachronisms in France, in 1789, carried consequences in its train infinitely more extensive than the mediocrity of its leaders and the vanity of their plans should have given rise to. No event was more disastrous for the monarchy, or exercised a more pernicious influence upon the development of the Revolution.

That which from the beginning marked the French Revolution as something extraordinary, was the infinite contrast between the weakness of the government which it established, and the powerfulness of the ideas it introduced to the world. This assembly, which neither knew how to govern France, nor yet to govern itself, and whose very existence depended upon the boldness of some factions, did much work for the future amid the uncertainties of the present, and planted indestructible footprints in the shifting sands. The anarchy that it had not created, but that its warped measures had aggravated, concealed from the eyes of contemporaries the fecundity of reforms which could have borne full fruit only in less troubled times. The assembly simply did itself justice, when in the month of February it answered its detractors by bringing to light the work it had accomplished in eight months:

"Some feign to ignore the good the national assembly has done; we are about to recall it to you. The rights of men were not recognised; they have been re-established. The nation had lost the right to pass laws and impose taxes; this right has been restored to it. Our public law was composed of privileges without number; we have destroyed them. A vexatious feudalism covered the whole of France; it has disappeared, never to return. You wished for the abolition of venality in the finances; it has been pronounced. You proved the need of a reform at least provisional, of the principal faults of the criminal code; it has been decreed. A code of civil laws will make all these obscure, intricate, and contradictory laws disappear. The assembly has completed the work of the new division of the kingdom that alone could sweep away even the last traces of the ancient prejudices, and substitute, for the selfish love of the province, the true love of country. We shall complete our work by a code of national instruction and education, which will place the constitution under the safeguard of future generations. Behold our work, ye French, or rather behold yours — what an honourable heritage you are about to give to your posterity. Raised to the rank of citizens, eligible for every employment, since everything is done by you and for you, equal in the eyes of the law, free to act, to speak, to write, owing nothing to men only to the common will, there is no finer condition possible. Can it be that there is a single citizen, worthy of the name, who would dare to cast a glance behind, who would like to raise up again the fragments with which we are surrounded, to contemplate again the old edifice?"

History does not offer any other example of reforms so far reaching. For the immense majority of the people, it was the Revolution that did it all. It is in this form that it became pre-eminently the national work of the French. It freed persons and property, it took place for the benefit of France and its inhabitants, it made the citizens draw closer to their native soil, it made this great idea of country which centuries had been slowly instilling into their souls, both public and popular. In this respect it completed the work of the monarchy. Some one recounts how, upon his return from Italy in 1797, Bonaparte said to Sieyès, "I have made a great nation." "It is we," answered Sieyès, "who first made the nation." Both were boasting. If the origin of the ideas that were applied was vaguely discerned, the obscure course of these ideas at all times escaped the notice of contemporaries. When they sought to find in the collection of the king's statutes principles to which they could attach the laws, that they were ready to carry through, they could not find any. The rights of the king filled documents which encumbered the archives; the nation had lost her rights. Nevertheless, a foundation of right was necessary to this great reform of state and society. Lacking historical rights, they took metaphysical ones, and being unable to declare the rights of the French, the assembly declared the Rights of Man, in the abstract, of the citizen of the world. This was moreover, in this century, the tendency of the human mind, and especially of the French spirit; and this was one of the principal causes of the intellectual authority that France exercised upon Europe.[c]

LOUIS CONCILIATES THE ASSEMBLY

Having grasped thus the earnest spirit that moved as a solemn undercurrent to the wild eddies and torments of the surface of the Revolution, let us turn back to the course of events following the crumbling of the Bastille and the tradition it stood for.[a]

The middle as well as the upper ranks furnished the first victims to insurrection.

In the meantime, where was the count of Artois, the baron de Breteuil, their bold projects, and their army? They slumbered or trembled, whilst the only fortress of the capital was attacked. Louis saw their weakness and incapacity; and, abandoning their counsels, hurried to the national assembly, intending to make peace with it, to proclaim his amity and sincere cordiality with it, and to crave its support and interference to restore order to the capital. At the same time he announced that orders were given that the troops should retire from the capital. Seeing the popular party thus victorious, the count of Artois, the Polignacs, and other inveterate courtiers, as we have seen, took their departure from France — as precipitate to fly as they had been tardy to act.

The national assembly, thus master of the sovereign through the influence of the Parisian mob, sent a deputation to thank the capital, and to organise anew its authorities, those of the monarchy having lost all influence. Bailly, formerly president, a man of letters and probity, headed this deputation, which was received with enthusiasm. Bailly himself was chosen to preside over the municipality, as mayor of Paris, in the place of the unfortunate Flesselles. A commander of the national guard was imperatively necessary. La Fayette, whose bust was in the Hôtel-de-Ville, recalling his campaigns in the cause of American liberty, was voted to this post. Lally-Tollendal, who was of the deputation, fascinated the mob by his eloquence, and, fortunately for him, was recompensed merely by their applauses. The Parisians were told that Louis was now cordially united with the national assembly. "He has hitherto been deceived," said La Fayette and Lally; "but he now sees the merit and the justice of the popular cause." The enthusiasm was general on this explication being made. Tears of joy were shed and there was universal rejoicing. The Revolution seemed already to have closed its list of horrors and of change.

Bailly, the new mayor, entertained this opinion; but he was soon undeceived. The suspicions of the populace returned. In a few hours they recommenced clamouring and crowding, and demanded the presence of the king in his capital, to reassure them, and repeat from his own mouth his intentions. Murmurs arose among the populace of the necessity of marching to Versailles, and bringing back the monarch. A deputation from the city was ordered to demand it. Louis anticipated their coming and request, by stating his readiness to visit Paris.

He accordingly proceeded thither on the 17th of July. Arrived at the gates of Paris, he was welcomed by the new mayor, who with a pedantic love of antithesis little worthy of Bailly, spoke the following poignant truth: "I present to your majesty the keys of the good city of Paris — the same which were presented to Henry IV. He reconquered his people. Here the people have reconquered their king." The procession, like funereal ones, had the appearance of a fête. The new militia was under arms. The tricolour cockade was in every hat. Blue and red were of old the colours of the city of Paris. White was now added, out of affection to the Bourbon king. The cockade being presented to the king by Bailly, at the Hôtel-de-Ville, he assumed it cheerfully, and bade the mayor state for him to the municipality that he approved of their acts. This royal adhesion to the Revolution being given, Louis returned to Versailles, rejoiced in heart that he had again escaped from his capital. The queen flung herself into his arms on beholding him: she had been prepared for worse.[b]

THE END OF "PRIVILEGE" (AUGUST 4TH, 1789)

The celebrated night session of the 4th of August has from the beginning been very diversely criticised. At times it has been called the St. Bartholomew's night of property, and at others the greatest moment of modern history. Neither of these judgments is quite suitable. The first is in bad taste; the resolutions of the 4th of August did not call forth war against the property of the old aristocracy, but rather checked it and dammed the stream instead of accelerating its descent. The last, to say the least of it, is exaggerated, for the assembly only did what it could not leave undone, and only gave a legitimate form to what had been the position for weeks. All the burdens which had been justly alleviated disappeared, and the resolutions which were passed rather calmed than stirred up the billows.

On the morning of the 4th of August, the question concerning human rights was "ayed" with almost unanimity of opinion; on the evening of the same day the duke de Noailles stepped into the tribune and put forward the proposal that, before the dissuasive proclamation was made to the revolutionary people, another should be sent out which partly granted their demands and partly promised to redress their just grievances. To start the payment of taxes, it must be declared that the taxes like all public burdens must be equally shared by all, that all feudal rights should be redeemed according to certain just estimates, but that socage, mortmain, and other vassalage should cease without compensation.

This speech was listened to in solemn silence, and was followed by a somewhat excited movement, especially amongst the Breton Club, out of whose midst the duke d'Aiguillon rushed on to the tribune. According to agreement he made a supplementary proposal that for the establishment of equal taxes not only individuals, such as Noailles suggested, but also all corporations, towns, municipalities which up till now had enjoyed exemption from taxes or any other privilege, be it in the assessment or raising of taxes, in future should be subject to taxation without distinction. Thus seigniorial rights, "as a burdensome tax injurious to agriculture and tending to depopulate the land," would be commuted at an estimated cost, which the national assembly would fix in every province, according to the proposals made to them by the debtor.

Thus the noble himself took the lead in renouncing rights which could no longer be held. Two of the greatest and most illustrious families, the Noailles and Aiguillons, sacrificed their privileges; French vanity played a part, but there was also something of old French chivalry in it. The official report states that "this example was received with inexpressible joy," but the excitement began when a deputy from Brittany took the word and demanded the acknowledgment of human rights for the afflicted peasantry. He declared that the national assembly might have prevented the burning of castles if in time they had redeemed the contents of the "infamous parchment" of the feudal lords; he reminded them of the great wrong done to humanity in allowing the lords to harness their peasants to carts like domestic animals and to compel them to beat the swamps at night, so that the frogs should not disturb the sleep of their voluptuous masters. "A universal cry proclaims, you have not a minute to lose; a day's delay brings forth fresh arson. Do you wish to give your law to a devastated France?" The greatest enthusiasm arose, and soon exceeded all bounds. One proposal followed another and the excitement increased with every speech.

The bishop of Nancy showed the example to the clergy, by sacrificing his feudal rights, and scarcely had the bishop of Chartres demanded the repeal of the same laws, when the whole nobility rose up to give their assent, and there was such a storm of applause and rejoicings that the proceedings had to be stopped. Then the play began again. When the nobility and clergy had nothing more to give, the provinces, towns, and corporations came and gave up their privileges. Many regretted that they could not give more, and those who had nothing to offer looked on dumbfounded and astonished to think that the agitation of one night had removed the difficulties which for fifteen years had caused so much bitter hatred, and prevented a regulation of affairs, the improvement of which the most circumspect statesmen had so long and in vain endeavoured to bring about.

The essential results of this remarkable session[1] were: The abolition of vassalage, the redemption of feudal rights, the abrogation of the jurisdiction of the lords of the manor, the repeal of their exclusive rights, such as pigeon-rearing and rabbit-breeding, etc., the abolition of the payment of tithes, equality of taxes, general admission to all offices in the state and army, suppression of the sale of offices, the removal of all town and provincial privileges, of ecclesiastical annates, the reorganisation of guilds, and the withdrawal of all pensions granted without legal titles.[e]

THE NEW CONSTITUTION

In a single hour of excitement, the proudest aristocracy and the most unbending church had levelled themselves with the peasant, and sacrificed those rights, rather than yield the smallest part of which they had, during the last ten years, persisted in risking, and at length precipitating monarchy and state. The privileged orders, which had so long weighed upon France, were swept away. The middle ranks succeeded to their place, and in a great measure to the difficulties and the envy of that place. What has been called the bourgeois class, in which now blended the professions and smaller agriculturists, had been completely victorious in that important struggle with the court and aristocracy. But already the working class, the artisan, the needy, began to feel the weight of that above it, and to look even upon simple citizens as aristocrats. The municipality was already clamoured against and bullied by the mob, which only wanted writers, orators, and demagogues to lead it on in the path of power. These did not yet exist. The dragon's teeth were sown indeed, but the crop of mutual slaughterers had not reached maturity. The shadow of royalty and of a court also existed, and attracted towards it a considerable share of popular attention and animosity. This averted for a time the struggle that was still inevitable betwixt the middle ranks of society and the lower.

An interval of two months now passed over without any flagrant scene

[1 Haas *f* calls this act one of "hitherto unparalleled disinterestedness." Jervis *g* says: "The decree passed by the assembly on this occasion was an act of revolution more profound and sweeping than even the destruction of the Bastille. It entirely changed the face of society, and ended in extremes which were by no means contemplated when it was first proposed." Schlosser *h* complains of the "senseless precipitancy" of the deed and thus divides the Revolution into acts: "The changes effected by these resolutions of the night between the 4th and 5th have with great justice been designated as the fourth act of the Revolution, which suddenly broke out in 1789. The first was on the 5th of May, when the third estate summoned the members of the other two to appear in their chamber; the second was the act of holding the assembly on the 20th in the tennis court, in contempt of the royal authority; the third, the storming of the Bastille on the 14th, and the institution of the national guard, together with the municipality of Paris."]

of popular violence. The assembly employed the time in fixing the basis of the new constitution; the municipality was busied in procuring bread for the Parisians; and Necker, who had returned to assume the ministry, tried in anguish all expedients to raise funds, at a time when neither tax could be levied nor loan raised. Although the latter was the more pressing, the constitution was the more important question. Mounier, Lally, Necker, proposed the English model; a scheme that was neither supported by the small body of noblesse, nor tolerated by the great majority. The existence of but one chamber was voted by an overwhelming majority. It was the question of the royal veto that excited difference. Should it exist at all—should it be absolute or suspensive? Sieyès would not allow of the word: he called it a "*lettre de cachet* against the will of the nation." The country joined in the discussion. The provincial towns sent addresses against the veto. The mob of the Palais Royal prepared a formidable deputation. La Fayette and Bailly stopped it at the gates of Paris. They had, for the time, recovered mastery of the popular mind. The king was advised by Necker to interfere, and state to the assembly his acceptance of the suspensive rather than the absolute veto. The former was accordingly decreed. Thus a single representative chamber, and a sovereign possessed merely of the power of deferring a law by his dissent, formed the outlines of the new constitution.

MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE
(1757–1834)

As yet the lower orders had no exclusive party, and scarcely an avowed partisan in the assembly, though Robespierre and other future demagogues sat silent and unnoticed on its benches. But their voices may be discerned in the cry for a national bankruptcy, that was raised on Necker's making a statement of financial distress. Mirabeau, however, whose want or disregard of principle was often supplied by the instinct of genius, started up in behalf of the middle ranks. With ironical force he proposed to take two thousand of the wealthiest citizens and fling them into the gulf of the public debt—to immolate them in order to fill it up. Such was his hardy metaphor. The assembly recoiled. "Aye," continued he, "and what is bankruptcy but this? The other day when mention was made of an imaginary insurrection of the Palais Royal, we heard amongst us the exclamation, 'Catiline is at the gates of Rome and the senate does naught but deliberate.' Certes there were round us then nor Catiline, nor perils, nor factions, nor Rome. But bankruptcy, hideous bankruptcy, is at our gates and in the midst of us, menacing our lives, our properties, and honour—and yet we deliberate!" Struck by this apostrophe, the assembly voted by acclamation to uphold the national credit, and assent to the financial scheme of Necker.

PUBLIC DISCOMFORT AND DISCONTENT

There were plans, however, at the moment in agitation, of more serious importance than either bankruptcy or credit. Both the court and the popular party had drawn breath; the one had recovered from its terrors, the latter had resumed its suspicion and impatience. Both conspired, the aristocracy as well as the rabble; whilst the middle ranks and the assembly were doomed to wait, and to submit to whichever should prove conqueror. Bailly and La Fayette in vain exerted themselves to keep the capital quiet. Famine prevailed (there having been a scant crop in some provinces about Paris). The people, always confined to one idea, and seeking in it a remedy for every woe, resumed the cry, "To Versailles! let us go to seek bread and the king at Versailles!"

The court, recurring to its warlike ideas, brought the regiment of Flanders to Versailles. The orangery, the gardens, were again occupied with troopers and bodyguards. The municipality of Paris was alarmed. La Fayette himself spoke openly of the plot against liberty. The mob caught the suspicion. On the 2nd of October a banquet was given by the bodyguards to the officers of the newly arrived regiment; those of the national guard of Versailles were also invited. It took place in the palace-theatre. Wine circulated; enthusiasm was excited. The soldiers of the regiments were admitted into the building; cups being handed to them, they drank to the health of the queen, and of the king. With drawn swords the banqueters pledged them. The queen, hearing of the fête, presented herself with the dauphin. A fresh effusion of loyalty ensued. Swords again flashed, with vows to support the royal cause, whilst the military band played the air of Cœur de Lion, "*O Richard, O mon roi, l'univers t'abandonne!*"[1] Accounts of the fête soon came to exasperate the Parisians, and to offer the agitators a pretext to excite tumult.[b]

CARLYLE'S ACCOUNT OF THE WOMEN'S INSURRECTION (OCTOBER, 1789)

Fancy what effect this Thyestes Repast, and trampling on the National Cockade, must have had in the famishing Bakers'-queues at Paris! Here with us is famine; but yonder at Versailles is food, enough and to spare! Patriotism stands in queue, shivering hungerstruck, insulted by Patrollotism; while bloodyminded Aristocrats, heated with excess of high living, trample on the National Cockade. Are we to have military onfall; and death also by starvation?

At the Café de Foy, this Saturday evening, a new thing is seen, not the last of its kind: a woman engaged in public speaking. Her poor man, she says, was put to silence by his District: their Presidents and Officials would not let him speak. Wherefore she here with her shrill tongue will speak.

Insurrection, which, La Fayette thought, might be "the most sacred of duties," ranks now, for the French people, among the duties which they can perform. Other mobs are dull masses; which roll onwards with a dull fierce tenacity, a dull fierce heat, but emit no light-flashes of genius as they go. The French mob, again, is among the liveliest phenomena of our world. So rapid, audacious; so clear-sighted, inventive, prompt to seize the moment;

[1 "Wines flowed, heads were lost, ladies distributed white cockades, and the tricolour was said to have been trampled underfoot. Meanwhile Paris died of hunger."—DUBUY.[d] The air "*O Richard, O mon roi*," became the royalist hymn, as later the Marseillaise became the popular war-cry.]

instinct with life to its finger-ends! That talent, were there no other, of spontaneously standing in queue, distinguishes, as we said, the French People from all Peoples, ancient and modern.

Let the Reader confess too that, taking one thing with another, perhaps few terrestrial Appearances are better worth considering than mobs. Your mob is a genuine outburst of Nature; issuing from, or communicating with, the deepest deep of Nature. Here once more, if nowhere else, is a Sincerity and Reality. Shudder at it; or even shriek over it, if thou must; nevertheless consider it. Such a Complex of human Forces and Individualities hurled forth, in their transcendental mood, to act and react, on circumstances and on one another; to work out what it is in them to work. The thing they will do is known to no man; least of all to themselves. It is the inflammablest immeasurable Fire-work, generating, consuming itself. Battles ever since Homer's time, when they were Fighting Mobs, have mostly ceased to be worth looking at, worth reading of or remembering. How many wearisome bloody Battles does History strive to represent; or even, in a husky way, to sing: — and she would omit or carelessly slur-over this one Insurrection of Women?

A thought, or dim raw-material of a thought, was fermenting all night, universally in the female head, and might explode. In squalid garret, on Monday morning Maternity awakes, to hear children weeping for bread. Maternity must forth to the streets, to the herb-markets and Bakers'-queues; meets there with hunger-stricken Maternity, sympathetic, exasperative. O we unhappy women! But, instead of Bakers'-queues, why not to Aristocrats' palaces, the root of the matter? *Allons!* Let us assemble. To the Hôtel-de-Ville; to Versailles; to the Lanterne!

In one of the Guardhouses of the Quartier Saint-Eustache, "a young woman" seizes a drum, — for how shall National Guards give fire on women, on a young woman? The young woman seizes the drum; sets forth, beating it, "uttering cries relative to the dearth of grains." Descend, O mothers; descend, ye Judiths, to food and revenge! — All women gather and go; crowds storm all stairs, force out all women: Robust Dames of the Halle, slim Mantua-makers, assiduous, risen with the dawn; ancient Virginity tripping to matins; the Housemaid, with early broom; all must go. Rouse ye, O women; the laggard men will not act; they say, we ourselves may act!

And so, like snowbreak from the mountains, for every staircase is a melted brook, it storms; tumultuous, wild-shrilling, towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. Tumultuous; with or without drum-music: for the Faubourg St. Antoine also has tucked up its gown; and with besom-staves, fire-irons, and even rusty pistols (void of ammunition), is flowing on. Sound of it flies, with a velocity of sound, to the utmost Barriers. By seven o'clock, on this raw October morning, fifth of the month, the Townhall will see wonders. Grand it was, says Camille,[i] to see so many Judiths, from eight to ten thousand of them in all, rushing out to search into the root of the matter!

The National Guards form on the outer stairs, with levelled bayonets; the ten thousand Judiths press up, resistless; with obtestations, with outspread hands, — merely to speak to the Mayor. The rear forces them; nay, from male hands in the rear, stones already fly: the National Guard must do one of two things; sweep the Place de Grève with cannon, or else open to right and left. They open; the living deluge rushes in. Through all rooms and cabinets, upwards to the topmost belfry: ravenous; seeking arms, seeking Mayors, seeking justice; — while, again, the better-dressed speak kindly

to the Clerks; point out the misery of these poor women; also their ailments, some even of an interesting sort.

And now doors fly under hatchets; the Judiths have broken the Armory; have seized guns and cannons, three money-bags, paper-heaps; torches flare: in few minutes, our brave Hôtel-de-Ville, which dates from the Fourth Henry, will, with all that it holds, be in flames! In flames, truly, — were it not that Usher Maillard, swift of foot, shifty of head, has returned!

Maillard snatches a drum; descends the Porch-stairs, ran-tan, beating sharp, with loud rolls, his Rogues'-march: To Versailles! *Allons; à Versailles!* As men beat on kettle or warmingpan, when angry she-bees, or say, flying desperate wasps, are to be hived; and the desperate insects hear it, and cluster round it, — simply as round a guidance, where there was none: so now these Menads round shifty Maillard, Riding-Usher of the Châtelet.

The seized cannon are yoked with seized cart-horses: brownlocked Demoiselle Théroigne, with pike and helmet, sits there as gunneress, "with haughty eye and serene fair countenance"; comparable, think the Deux Amis,[n] to the Maid of Orleans, or even recalling "the idea of Pallas Athene." Sight of sights: Bacchantes, in these ultimate Formalised Ages!

Remarkable Maillard, if fame were not an accident, and History a distillation of Rumour, how remarkable wert thou! He hastily nominates or sanctions generalesses, captains of tens and fifties; — and so, in loosest-flowing order, to the rhythm of some "eight drums" (having laid aside his own), with the Bastille Volunteers bringing up his rear, once more takes the road.

Chaillot, which will promptly yield baked loaves, is not plundered; nor are the Sèvres Potteries broken. The press of women still continues, for it is the cause of all Eve's Daughters, mothers that are, or that ought to be. No carriage-lady, were it with never such hysterics, but must dismount, in the mud roads, in her silk shoes, and walk. In this manner, amid wild October weather, they, a wild unwinged stork-flight, through the astonished country wend their way.

Nevertheless, news, despatches from La Fayette, or vague noise of rumour, have pierced through, by side roads. In the National Assembly, while all is busy discussing the order of the day — Mirabeau steps up to the President, experienced Mounier as it chanced to be; and articulates, in bass under-tone: "*Mounier, Paris marche sur nous* (Paris is marching on us)." "Paris marching on us?" responds Mounier, with an atrabiliar accent: "Well, so much the better! We shall the sooner be a Republic." Mirabeau quits him, as one quits an experienced President getting blindfold into deep waters; and the order of the day continues as before.

La Fayette is dictating despatches for Versailles, when a Deputation introduces itself to him. "*Mon Général*, we are deputed by the Six Companies of Grenadiers. We do not think you a traitor, but we think the Government betrays you; it is time that this end. We cannot turn our bayonets against women crying to us for bread. The people are miserable, the source of the mischief is at Versailles: we must go seek the King, and bring him to Paris. We must exterminate (*exterminer*) the *Régiment de Flandre* and the *Gardes-du-Corps*, who have dared to trample on the National Cockade. If the King be too weak to wear his crown, let him lay it down. You will crown his Son, you will name a Council of Regency: and all will go better." Reproachful astonishment paints itself on the face of La Fayette; speaks itself from his eloquent chivalrous lips: in vain. "My General, we would shed the last drop of our blood for you; but the root of the mischief

is at Versailles; we must go and bring the King to Paris; all the people wish it, *tout le peuple le veut.*"

My General descends to the outer staircase; and harangues: once more in vain. "To Versailles! To Versailles!" The great Scipio-Americanus can do nothing; not so much as escape. "*Morbleu, mon Général,*" cry the Grenadiers serrying their ranks as the white charger makes a motion that way, "you will not leave us, you will abide with us!"

On the white charger, La Fayette, in the slowest possible manner, going and coming, and eloquently haranguing among the ranks, rolls onward with his thirty thousand. St. Antoine, with pike and cannon, has preceded him; a mixed multitude, of all and of no arms, hovers on his flanks and skirts; the country once more pauses agape: *Paris marche sur nous.*

About this same moment, Maillard has halted his draggled Menads on the last hill-top; and now Versailles, and the Château of Versailles, and far and wide the inheritance of Royalty opens to the wondering eye. Beautiful all; softly embosomed; as if in sadness, in the dim moist weather!

Cunning Maillard's dispositions are obeyed. The draggled Insurrectionists advance up the Avenue, "in three columns," among the four Elm-rows; "singing *Henri Quatre,*" with what melody they can; and shouting *Vive le Roi.* Versailles, though the Elm-rows are dripping wet, crowds from both sides, with: "*Vivent nos Parisiennes,* Our Paris ones forever!"

The Bodyguards are already drawn up in front of the Palace Grates; and look down the Avenue de Versailles; sulky, in wet buckskins. Flanders too is there, repentant of the Opera-Repast. Also Dragoons dismounted are there. Finally Major Lecointre, and what he can gather of the Versailles National Guard.

President Mounier of the National Assembly had his own forebodings. The order of the day is getting forward. Members whisper, uneasily come and go: the order of the day is evidently not the day's want. Till at length, from the outer gates, is heard a rustling and justling, shrill uproar and squabbling, muffled by walls; which testifies that the hour is come! Rushing and crushing one hears now; then enter Usher Maillard, with a Deputation of Fifteen muddy dripping Women,—having, by incredible industry, and aid of all the macers, persuaded the rest to wait out of doors. National Assembly shall now, therefore, look its august task directly in the face: regenerative Constitutionalism has an unregenerate Sansculottism bodily in front of it; crying, "Bread! Bread!"

President Mounier, with a speedy Deputation, among whom we notice the repectable figure of Doctor Guillotin, gets himself forthwith on march. Vice-President shall continue the order of the day; Usher Maillard shall stay by him to repress the women. It is four o'clock, of the miserablest afternoon, when Mounier steps out.

Innumerable squalid women beleaguer the President and Deputation; insist on going with him: has not his Majesty himself, looking from the window, sent out to ask, What we wanted? "Bread, and speech with the King (*Du pain, et parler au Roi*)," that was the answer. Twelve women are clamorously added to the Deputation. Finally the Grates are opened; the Deputation gets access, with the Twelve women too in it.

But already Pallas Athene (in the shape of Demoiselle Théroigne) is busy with Flanders and the dismounted Dragoons. She, and such women as are fittest, go through the ranks; speak with an earnest jocosity; clasp rough troopers to their patriot bosom, crush down spontoons and musketoons with soft arms: can a man, that were worthy of the name of man, attack

famishing patriot women? Théroigne had only the limited earnings of her profession of unfortunate-female; money she had not, but brown locks, the figure of a Heathen Goddess, and an eloquent tongue and heart.

Behold, however, the Twelve She-deputies return from the Château. Without President Mounier, indeed; but radiant with joy, shouting "Life to the King and his House." Apparently the news are good, Mesdames? News of the best! Five of us were admitted to the internal splendours, to the Royal Presence. His words were of comfort, and that only: there shall be provision sent to Paris, if provision is in the world; grains shall circulate free as air; millers shall grind, or do worse, while their millstones endure; and nothing be left wrong which a Restorer of French Liberty can right.

Good news these; but, to wet Menads, all-too incredible! There seems no proof, then? Words of comfort,—they are words only; which will feed nothing. The miscredited Twelve hasten back to the Château, for an "answer in writing." So sink the shadows of night, blustering, rainy; and all paths grow dark. Strangest Night ever seen in these regions,—perhaps since the Bartholomew Night.

The Assembly melts into deliquium; or, as it is officially called, adjourns. Mounier arrives at last to find his Senate all gone; and in its stead a Senate of Menads! For as Erasmus's Ape mimicked, say with wooden splint, Erasmus shaving, so do these Amazons hold, in mock majesty, some confused parody of National Assembly. They make motions; deliver speeches; pass enactments; productive at least of loud laughter. All galleries and benches are filled; a Strong Dame of the Market is in Mounier's Chair.

Experienced Mounier, in these circumstances, takes a twofold resolution: To reconvoke his Assembly Members by sound of drum; also to procure a supply of food. Swift messengers fly, to all bakers, cooks, pastrycooks, vintners, restorers; drums beat, accompanied with shrill vocal proclamation, through all streets. They come: the Assembly Members come; what is still better, the provisions come. On tray and barrow come these latter; loaves, wine, great store of sausages. All benches are crowded; in the dusky galleries, duskier with unwashed heads, is a strange "coruscation,"—of impromptu bill-hooks. It is exactly five months this day since these same galleries were filled with high-plumed jewelled Beauty, raining bright influences; and now? To such length have we got in regenerating France.

Towards midnight lights flare on the hill; La Fayette's lights! The roll of his drums comes up the Avenue de Versailles. He has halted and harangued so often, on the march; spent nine hours on four leagues of road. There are with him two Paris Municipals; they were chosen from the Three Hundred. He gets admittance through the locked and padlocked Grates, through sentries and ushers, to the Royal Halls.

The King, with Monsieur, with Ministers and Marshals, is waiting to receive him: He "is come," in his highflown chivalrous way, "to offer his head for the safety of his Majesty's." The two Municipals state the wish of Paris: four things, of quite pacific tenor. First, that the honour of guarding his sacred person be conferred on patriot National Guards;—say, the Centre Grenadiers, who as Gardes Françaises were wont to have that privilege. Second, that provisions be got, if possible. Third, that the Prisons, all crowded with political delinquents, may have judges sent them. Fourth, that it would please his Majesty to come and live in Paris. To all which four wishes, except the fourth, his Majesty answers readily, Yes. To the fourth he can answer only, Yes or No; would so gladly answer, Yes and No! There is time for deliberation. Whereupon La Fayette and the two

Municipals, with highflown chivalry, take their leave. A stone is rolled from every heart. The fair Palace Dames publicly declare that this La Fayette, detestable though he be, is their saviour for once.

The National Assembly is harangued, on motion of Mirabeau, discontinues the Penal Code, and dismisses for this night. Menadism, Sansculottism has cowered into guardhouses, barracks of Flanders, to the light of a cheerful fire; failing that, to churches, officehouses, sentry-boxes, wheresoever wretchedness can find a lair. The troublous Day has brawled itself to rest: no lives yet lost but that of one warhorse. Insurrectionary Chaos lies slumbering round the Palace, like Ocean round a Diving-bell, — no crevice yet disclosing itself. Deep sleep has fallen promiscuously on the high and on the low; suspending most things, even wrath and famine. Thus, then, has ended the First Act of the Insurrection of Women. How it will turn on the morrow? The morrow, as always, is with the Fates!

The Attack on the Palace

The dull dawn of a new morning, drizzly and chill, had but broken over Versailles, when it pleased Destiny that a Bodyguard should look out of window, on the right wing of the Château, to see what prospect there was in Heaven and in Earth. Rascality male and female is prowling in view of him. Ill words breed worse: till the worst word come; and then the ill deed. Did the maledicent Bodyguard, getting (as was too inevitable) better malediction than he gave, load his musketoon, and threaten to fire; nay actually fire? Were wise who wist! It stands asserted; to us not credibly. But be this as it may, menaced Rascality, in whinnying scorn, is shaking at all Grates: the fastening of one (some write, it was a chain merely) gives way; Rascality is in the Grand Court, whinnying louder still.

The maledicent Bodyguard, more Bodyguards than he do now give fire; a man's arm is shattered. Lecointre will depose that "the Sieur Cardine, a National Guard without arms, was stabbed." But see, sure enough, poor Jérôme l'Héritier, an unarmed National Guard he too, "cabinet-maker, a saddler's son, of Paris," with the down of youthhood still on his chin, — he reels death-stricken; rushes to the pavement, scattering it with his blood and brains! — Alleleu! Wilder than Irish wakes rises the howl; of pity, of infinite revenge. In few moments, the Grate of the inner and inmost Court, which they name Court of Marble, this too is forced, or surprised, and bursts open: the Court of Marble too is overflowed: up the Grand Staircase, up all stairs and entrances rushes the living Deluge! Deshuttes and Varigny, the two sentry Bodyguards, are trodden down, are massacred with a hundred pikes. Women snatch their cutlasses, or any weapon, and storm-in Menadic: — other women lift the corpse of shot Jérôme; lay it down on the Marble steps; there shall the livid face and smashed head, dumb forever, speak.

The terrorstruck Bodyguards fly, bolting and barricading. Whitherward? Through hall on hall: wo, now! towards the Queen's Suite of Rooms, in the furthest room of which the Queen is now asleep. Five sentinels rush through that long Suite; they are in the Anteroom knocking loud: "Save the Queen!" Trembling women fall at their feet with tears: are answered: "Yes, we will die; save ye the Queen!"

Trembling Maids of Honour hastily wrap the Queen; not in robes of state. She flies for her life, across the Œil-de-Bœuf. She is in the King's Apartment, in the King's arms; she clasps her children amid a faithful few.

The Imperial-hearted bursts into mother's tears: "O my friends, save me and my children, *O mes amis, sauvez moi et mes enfans!*" The battering of Insurrectionary axes clangs audible across the Œil-de-Bœuf. What an hour!

On a sudden the battering has ceased! Wild rushing; the cries grow fainter; there is silence, or the tramp of regular steps; then a friendly knocking: "We are the Centre Grenadiers, old Gardes Françaises: Open to us, Messieurs of the Garde-du-Corps; we have not forgotten how you saved us at Fontenoy!" The door is opened; enter Captain Gondran and the Centre Grenadiers: there are military embracings; there is sudden deliverance from death into life.

Strange Sons of Adam! It was to "exterminate" these Gardes-du-Corps that the Centre Grenadiers left home: and now they have rushed to save them from extermination. The memory of common peril, of old help, melts the rough heart; bosom is clasped to bosom, not in war.

Now too La Fayette, suddenly roused, not from sleep (for his eyes had not yet closed), arrives; with passionate popular eloquence, with prompt military word of command. National Guards, suddenly roused, by sound of trumpet and alarm-drum, are all arriving. The death-melly ceases. The King's Apartments are safe.

The Bodyguards, you can observe, have now of a verity "hoisted the National Cockade": for they step forward to the windows or balconies, hat aloft in hand, on each hat a huge tricolour; and fling over their bandoleers in sign of surrender; and shout *Vive la Nation.* To which how can the generous heart respond but with, *Vive le Roi; vivent les Gardes-du-Corps?* His Majesty himself has appeared with La Fayette on the balcony, and again appears: *Vive le Roi* greets him from all throats; but also from some one throat is heard, "*Le Roi à Paris*, The King to Paris!"

Her Majesty too, on demand, shows herself, though there is peril in it: she steps out on the balcony, with her little boy and girl. "No children, *Point d'enfans!*" cry the voices. She gently pushes back her children; and stands alone, her hands serenely crossed on her breast: "Should I die," she had said, "I will do it." Such serenity of heroism has its effect. La Fayette, with ready wit, in his highflown chivalrous way, takes that fair queenly hand, and, reverently kneeling, kisses it: thereupon the people do shout *Vive la Reine.* And still "*Vive le Roi*"; and also "*Le Roi à Paris*," not now from one throat, but from all throats as one, for it is the heart's wish of all mortals.

The King taken to Paris

Yes, The King to Paris: what else? Ministers may consult, and National Deputies wag their heads: but there is now no other possibility. You have forced him to go willingly. "At one o'clock!" La Fayette gives audible assurance to that purpose; and universal Insurrection, with immeasurable shout, and a discharge of all the fire-arms, clear and rusty, that it has, returns him acceptance. What a sound; heard for leagues: a doom-peal! — That sound too rolls away; into the Silence of Ages.

And thus has Sansculottism made prisoner its King; revoking his parole. The Monarchy has fallen; and not so much as honourably: no, ignominiously; with struggle, indeed, oft-repeated; but then with unwise struggle; wasting its strength in fits and paroxysms; at every new paroxysm foiled more pitifully than before. Were Louis wise, he would this day abdicate. Is it not strange so few Kings abdicate; and none yet heard of has been

known to commit suicide? Fritz the First, of Prussia, alone tried it; and they cut the rope.

As for the National Assembly, which decrees this morning that it "is inseparable from his Majesty," and will follow him to Paris, there may one thing be noted: its extreme want of bodily health. After the Fourteenth of July there was a certain sickliness observable among honourable Members; so many demanding passports, on account of infirm health. But now, for these following days, there is a perfect murrain: President Mounier, Lally-Tollendal, Clermont-Tonnerre, and all Constitutional Two-Chamber Royalists needing change of air; as most No-Chamber Royalists had formerly done. For, in truth, it is the second Emigration this that has now come; most extensive among Commons Deputies, Noblesse, Clergy: so that "to Switzerland alone there go sixty thousand." They will return in the day of accounts! Yes, and have hot welcome. — But Emigration on Emigration is the peculiarity of France. One Emigration follows another; grounded on reasonable fear, unreasonable hope, largely also on childish pet. The high flyers have gone first, now the lower flyers; and ever the lower will go, down to the crawlers.

But here, meanwhile, the question arises: Was Philippe d'Orléans seen, this day, "in the Bois de Boulogne, in grey surtout"; waiting under the wet sere foliage, what the day might bring forth? Alas, yes, the Eidolon of him was, — in Weber's[l] and other such brains. The Châtelet shall make large inquisition into the matter, examining a hundred and seventy witnesses, and Deputy Chabroud publish his Report; but disclose nothing further.

Now, however, the short hour has struck. His Majesty is in his carriage, with his Queen, sister Elizabeth, and two royal children. Not for another hour can the infinite Procession get marshalled and under way. The weather is dim drizzling; the mind confused; the noise great. Processional marches not a few our world has seen; Roman triumphs and ovations, Cabiric cymbal-beatings, Royal progresses, Irish funerals; but this of the French Monarchy marching to its bed remained to be seen. Miles long, and of breadth losing itself in vagueness, for all the neighbouring country crowds to see. Slow; stagnating along, like shoreless Lake, yet with a noise like Niagara, like Babel and Bedlam. A splashing and a tramping; a hurrahing, uproaring, musket-volleying; — the truest segment of Chaos seen in these latter Ages! Till slowly it disembogue itself, in the thickening dusk, into expectant Paris, through a double row of faces all the way from Passy to the Hôtel-de-Ville. Consider this: Vanguard of National troops; with trains of artillery; of pikemen and pikewomen, mounted on cannons, on carts, hackney-coaches, or on foot; — tripudiating, in tricolour ribbons from head to heel; loaves stuck on the points of bayonets, green boughs stuck in gun-barrels. Next, as main-march, "fifty cart-loads of corn," which have been lent, for peace, from the stores of Versailles. Behind which follow stragglers of the Garde-du-Corps; all humiliated, in Grenadier bonnets. Close on these comes the Royal Carriage; come Royal Carriages: for there are a Hundred National Deputies too, among whom sits Mirabeau, — his remarks not given. Then finally, pellmell, as rearguard, Flanders, Swiss, Hundred Swiss, other Bodyguards, Brigands, whosoever cannot get before. Between and among all which masses, flows without limit St. Antoine, and the Menadic Cohort. Menadic especially about the Royal Carriage; tripudiating there, covered with tricolour; singing "allusive songs; pointing with one hand to the Royal Carriage, which the allusions hit, and pointing to the Provision wagons with the other hand, and according to Toulongeon[j]

these words: "Courage, Friends! We shall not want bread now; we are bringing you the Baker, the Bakeress and Baker's Boy (*le Boulanger, la Boulangère et le petit Mitron*)."

Mercier,[k] in his loose way, estimates the Procession and assistants at two hundred thousand. He says it was one boundless inarticulate Haha; — transcendent World-Laughter; comparable to the Saturnalia of the Ancients. Why not? Here too, as we said, is Human Nature once more human; shudder at it whoso is of shuddering humour: yet behold it is human. It has "swallowed all formulas."

Thus, however, has the slow-moving Chaos, or modern Saturnalia of the Ancients, reached the Barrier; and must halt, to be harangued by Mayor Bailly. Thereafter it has to lumber along, between the double row of faces, in the transcendent heaven-lashing Haha; two hours longer, towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. Then again to be harangued there, by several persons; by Moreau de Saint-Méry among others; Moreau of the Three-thousand orders, now National Deputy for Santo Domingo. To all which poor Louis, "who seemed to experience a slight emotion" on entering this Town-hall, can answer only that he "comes with pleasure, with confidence among his people." Mayor Bailly, in reporting it, forgets "confidence": and the poor Queen says eagerly: "Add, with confidence." — "Messieurs," rejoins Mayor Bailly, "you are happier than if I had not forgotten."

Finally, the King is shewn on an upper balcony, by torchlight, with a huge tricolour in his hat: "and all the people," says Weber,[l] "grasped one another's hands"; — thinking now surely the New Era was born. Hardly till eleven at night can Royalty get to its vacant, long-deserted Palace of the Tuileries; to lodge there, somewhat in strolling-player fashion. It is Tuesday the sixth of October, 1789.

Poor Louis has two other Paris Processions to make: one ludicrous-ignominious like this; the other not ludicrous nor ignominious, but serious, nay sublime.[m]

THE PROPERTY OF THE CLERGY ABSORBED

Twenty months now elapsed of comparative tranquillity. There is no striking event; much intrigue, indeed, fiery debating, the training, dividing, and forming of parties. The revolutionary monster slumbered, stirring at times, and showing life by starts, but not awakening fully. La Fayette possessed most power out of the assembly; and he exercised it with a firmness, a disinterestedness, and courage that did him immortal honour. His first act was to drive the duke of Orleans to exile. It is not well known whether his departure was procured by menace or inducement. His absence had certainly the effect of allowing agitation to subside.[b]

On October 10th, the assembly renewed the discussion concerning the goods of the clergy. The abolition of tithes had concluded the first part of this discussion. It remained to come to some decision regarding the livings. Besides the tithes, producing about 120,000,000 livres, the clergy had immense landed properties,[1] bringing in about 80,000,000 of revenue. They possessed in the largest part of France one-third of the land, half in certain counties, and a good deal more than half in others. Before the abolition of tithes, this gave the clergy 200,000,000 in revenue, without counting 30,000,000

[1] Said to amount to one-fifth of all real property. The average salary of a curé, in 1784, was 720 francs; of the lowest of higher clergy, about 4,000 livres. The pay of the lower clergy aggregated 50,000,000 livres, that of the higher clergy 250,000,000. The lower clergy numbered 60,000; the higher, 11,000. There were 23,000 monks and 37,000 nuns.]

that the nation paid for expenses of worship, keeping up the buildings, and fees to the clergy — in all, 230,000,000, which would amount nowadays to 600,000,000. Of these 230,000,000, only 45,000,000 went to parish priests, the rest went to higher dignitaries and the monks.

It was a noble who proposed that church goods should belong to the nation, it was a bishop who took up the motion — the bishop of Autun, Talleyrand de Périgord, a young prelate of good family, very witty, a Voltairian of rather loose morals, and one who joined the revolutionists merely through ambition and a desire to join in anything new. His political rôle, like that of La Fayette, was not to finish for more than forty years after '89, but this was the only connection there existed between the two rôles. The high morality of La Fayette never changed. With Talleyrand it was quite the contrary. He began by serving the Revolution well. He presented the assembly with a plan by which the nation could put its hand on the whole of the church property and gain a revenue of one hundred millions. These properties could be sold to pay up a great many judicial salaries owing and to make up deficits.

TALLEYRAND

Mirabeau and the other deputies, though accepting the principles, modified the proposition of Talleyrand. The greater part of the bishops made determined resistance.

On Mirabeau's proposition, the assembly declared November 2nd, by a majority of 568 against 346, that all church goods should be at the national disposal, but that the nation was to provide for expenses of public worship, salaries for ministers, and the relief of the poor.[1] So ended the Clergy Act. The clergy were no longer an order in the state, they were only a class of citizens charged with looking after public worship.

The assembly ordered a visitation and opening of monastic prisons, those clerical bastilles where so many secret cruelties were practised, and where

[1 The state was authorised to sell church property to the amount of 400,000,000 livres. The purchasers were the lower middle classes in the country, who thus became attached to the Revolution.]

victims of both sexes, monks and nuns, condemned by unpitying superiors, were imprisoned in frightful underground vaults. These vaults were called in derision the *In pace*, and *Allez en paix*. Cruelty had become more rare. There was in the eighteenth century, in the convents as everywhere else, a relaxation rather than strictness of manners. But what had not stopped was parental compulsion of daughters to become nuns against their will.

The assembly gave a temporary edict against taking monastic vows; then, some time after, it attacked the question of the religious orders, a question which was closely related to that of clerical goods. The organisation of monastic orders was attacked as incompatible with the rights of man and with all the principles that the Revolution wished to establish. "These are," said Barnave, "societies contrary to society." "In a moment of passing fervour," said Deputy Garat, "a young man vows to know thenceforth neither father or mother, never to be husband or citizen; he submits his will to the will of another, his soul to the soul of another, he renounces all liberty at an age when he could not dispose of any property; his oath is a civil suicide. Man has no more right to attempt his civil than his natural life."

The assembly deemed that the religious orders, which had formerly rendered service to the state in agriculture, in education, and in science, had become for the most part both useless and harmful. After two days of stormy discussion it was decreed, February 13th, 1790, that the law no longer recognised monastic vows, that the orders and congregations of both sexes should be suppressed in France.

The assembly, in striking at institutions, took every care of individuals, and showed neither violence nor harshness. It also made a considerable exception to its decree. It did not touch, provisionally, orders or congregations charged with public education or the care of the sick. Those powerful monastic institutions, which had played so considerable a rôle in France and Europe since the commencement of the Middle Ages, were not utterly to disappear. Uprooted in the eighteenth century, they took root again in the nineteenth. The struggle between the modern spirit and that of the past was not ended by a single victory.

THE ISSUE OF ASSIGNATS, SALE OF NATIONAL PROPERTIES, ETC.

Before the return of Necker to manage affairs, the government, which had already 70,000,000 livres in bank, authorised the bankers to pay their bills in letters of exchange instead of money, and enforced their circulation. The bankers, with Necker as their centre, sustained for a little while the credit of the bank. But when Necker had drawn ninety fresh millions, the credit declined; merchants began to refuse the bills; capitalists in their turn ceased to back Necker. The two loans that he had attempted in the autumn of 1789 fell through, perhaps more from the assembly's fault than his, they having reduced the advantages offered by Necker to the lenders. Bills of exchange, already looked on askance, were the next resource. A new advance of 80,000,000 was asked, making in all 240,000,000 to add to the 878,000,000 of a floating debt.

What could be done to avoid bankruptcy and settle this enormous debt? There was only one way — national property; that is to say, the crown domains and church holdings. The assembly decided to sell (1) the lands and buildings belonging to the crown, which were not very considerable, leaving the king the royal castles and the forests; (2) a part of the church property, the whole to produce 400,000,000. As this sale could not be immediately effected.

the assembly decided to create negotiable orders for a similar amount of 400,000,000 assigned on the goods about to be sold. These orders were called assignats, a name soon to become sadly famous.[e]

'It was at this memorable epoch that the great reformation in the assembly began. The division of France into provinces was done away with; departments were created, private privileges abolished, and administration given by one regular and uniform way. That was one of the greatest glories of the constitution. In better times, the creation of departments became for France a fruitful and inexhaustible source of progress. The centralisation of power was consummated and already one could foresee the basis of a unique and strong government. Great changes were also introduced in the superintendence of dioceses. The assembly forbade the bishops to have any communication with the pope. Henceforth they would be elected by the people. All priests had to take an oath of fidelity to the new constitution. The greater part preferred exile or death. Their ecclesiastical dignities were taken from them and given to priests who had taken the oath.[f]

The assembly abolished parliaments, and remodelled the judicature. [Among other things, they separated administrative and judicial powers, and introduced the jury trial in criminal courts.] Tithes and feudal services had been previously done away with. Titles of honour were now abolished, Matthew de Montmorency being foremost to make the sacrifice.

This career of legislation was, one should think, sufficiently democratic. It fully satisfied the middle classes, La Fayette, and those who rallied round him, as well as the majority of the assembly. Within its precincts, the demagogues, who aspired to form and head a popular party, with difficulty found an opportunity to develop their sentiments or forward their plans. They succeeded, however, in becoming masters of a club, first established by the moderate friends of liberty. This, on the removal of the king and assembly to Paris, had installed itself in the convent of the Jacobins. Here, as violence gained ground, the moderates, such as La Fayette, seceded and formed a separate club. Barnave, a young Protestant barrister, and the Lameths, assumed the lead in the Jacobins at their departure. This trio envied and detested equally Mirabeau and La Fayette, and seemed actuated, more by the ambition of pre-eminence than by any profound conviction or principle, to separate and form a schism. They coquetted with the genuine party of the lower orders rather than embraced it.

Mirabeau was actuated by more independent opinions. Towards the end of 1789 he had begun to rein in the zeal which hitherto had borne him headlong in the path of revolution. His ardour cooled, and he could not but disapprove of that constitution which he had contributed to form. "He thought it too democratic for a monarchy; for a democracy there was a king too much." His sagacity saw the impracticability of the existing system. He consequently leagued secretly with the court to support the crown, and recover for it a portion of strength requisite for its existence. La Fayette, on the contrary, held firm to the constitution now established. It was not in the power of the king to unite in his behalf two such powerful men, who in fact represented the same cause — that of the middle orders.

THE CIVIC OATH (JULY 14TH, 1790)

Louis XVI is accused of irresolution by some writers, of insincerity by others. Never was man more deserving of commiseration and excuse. In February, 1790, we find him embarked frankly with the nation, coming down

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spontaneously to the assembly, and giving an uncalled-for expression to its acts, that excited universal enthusiasm. In July of the same year he presided over the famous Federation, or union of the Parisians with deputations from the provinces, to swear to the constitution on the altar of the country. Talleyrand was the officiating bishop in this ceremony, so minutely detailed and honoured by French historians, though in itself a pomp of little importance, a fête at once to celebrate the anniversary of the destruction of the Bastille, and to honour the birth of a constitution destined to be ephemeral.[g]

The ceremony, so racial in its expression, is thus described by the marquis de Ferrières, who was an eye-witness:

"More than 300,000 men and women of Paris and the suburbs had been assembled since six o'clock in the morning on the Champ-de-Mars, and, seated on steps of turf which formed an immense circus, wet, muddy, armed with parasols against the torrents of rain which deluged them, wiping their faces at the least ray of sunshine, rearranging their head-dress, waited, laughing and talking. A large amphitheatre had been erected for the king, the royal family, the ambassadors, and the deputies. The federates who arrived first began to dance farandoles; those who followed joined them, and formed a circle which soon enclosed part of the Champ-de-Mars. It was a sight worthy of a philosophic spectator, this crowd of men who had come from the most distant parts of France, carried away by the impulse of the national character, banishing every memory of the past, every thought of the present, every fear of the future, abandoning themselves to delightful unconcern, and 300,000 spectators of all ages and of both sexes watching their movements, beating time with their hands, forgetting the rain, their hunger, and the weariness of the long waiting. At last, when the entire procession had entered the Champ-de-Mars, the dance ceased, and each federate joined his banner.

"The bishop of Autun [Talleyrand] prepared to celebrate mass on an altar of ancient style, raised in the middle of the Champ-de-Mars. Three hundred priests wearing white surplices, crossed by wide tricolour sashes, took their places at the four corners of the altar. The bishop of Autun blessed the oriflamme and the eighty-three banners; he chanted the *Te Deum*. Twelve hundred musicians played the hymn. La Fayette, at the head of the staff of the Parisian militia, and of the deputies of the land and naval troops, went up to the altar and swore, in the name of the troops and federates, to be faithful to the nation, to the law, and to the king. The discharge of forty guns announced this solemn oath. The twelve hundred musicians made the air re-echo with military songs, the flags and banners waved; drawn swords glittered. The president of the national assembly repeated the same oath. The people and deputies answered by cries of, 'I swear it!'

"Then the king rose, and pronounced in a loud voice: 'I, king of the French, swear to use the power which the constitutional decree of the state has intrusted to me, to maintain the constitution which has been enacted by the national assembly and accepted by me.' The queen took the dauphin in her arms, held him up to the people, and said: 'This is my son; he joins with me in those sentiments.' This unexpected action was greeted by repeated cries of: 'Long live the king. Long live the queen. Long live M. le dauphin.' The solemn sound of the guns still mingled with the warlike sounds of military instruments, and with the shouts of the people; the weather had cleared, the sun shone out in all his glory; it seemed as if the Eternal himself wished to witness this mutual engagement, and ratify it by

his presence. Yes, he saw it, he heard it; and the fearful evils which, since that day, have not ceased to afflict France, O ever active and ever faithful Providence, are the just punishment of perjury. Thou hast smitten both the monarch and his subjects, because monarch and subjects broke their oath!"[p]

THE REVOLT OF THE TROOPS (AUGUST, 1790)

The assembly had decreed on the 28th of February, and the 19th and 31st of July, 1790, some important things with regard to the army — that the purchase of military commissions should be abolished; that the soldiers' pay should be increased; the maximum number for the standing army in time of peace was to be 156,000 men.

The greatest danger was the absence of a good understanding between the officers and men. The former, except in the artillery and engineers, were aristocrats. The soldiers and non-commissioned officers were for the Revolution. Besides political opposition there were interested quarrels. Each regiment had its bank, formed of the stoppages kept back out of each man's poor pay. Officers were charged with the bank administration; but they did it badly and returned no banking sheets. Constant waste and negligence prevailed. Under the Old Régime, the soldier had been obliged to put up with everything; now he rose up, claimed his rights, demanded an account. The officers were not at all pleased, and secretly incited men of their own rank, who were expert swordsmen, to provoke the chief complainants and those who were founding patriotic societies in the army to duels. Finally they drove out of the regiments the most patriotic by giving them the *cartouches jaunes* — a sort of brand of infamy. All this brought about new troubles in the garrisons of the eastern provinces. At Nancy the king's regiment (King's Own), a corps *d'élite*, who had almost the same privileges as the old *gardes françaises*, rose to hinder the arrest of a soldier who had disobeyed orders. The commander was obliged to yield. A riot of the same kind, with regard to the bank of a regiment, took place at Metz, under the very eyes of General Bouillé.

All discipline was over. The despatches sent by the commander at Nancy to Paris exaggerated the gravity of the situation. La Fayette was alarmed by the disorganisation of the army and only thought of establishing order at any price. The sedition spread to other regiments, founded on a rumour that General Bouillé, who was at Metz, and Malseigne had come to an understanding with the Austrians to make a counter revolution. The soldiers had arrested and imprisoned at Nancy the commander of that place. Now it had come to open rebellion. The duty of repressing this was given to the marquis de Bouillé, commander-general of the northern and eastern frontiers. He took with him the most dependable of the German and Swiss troops and marched on Nancy with 3,000 foot and 1,400 horse.

Bouillé marched his troops on the Stainville gate. Its defenders, who had a cannon, wanted to fire. A young officer of the King's Own, Désilles, threw himself at the cannon's mouth to prevent at any cost the battle signal being given. They pushed him away, but he heroically persisted under shot and bayonet and was dragged away only when riddled with bullets. The cannon was fired, but Bouillé's soldiers dashed on and forced the gate. Its defenders took refuge in the houses, from whence they kept up a deadly fire, and a fierce fight raged in the centre of the town. The two French regiments hesitated. They took no part, and the Swiss of the Châteauvieux regiment and the people

of Nancy who fought with them were finally crushed. There were several hundred killed on one side and the other (August 31st, 1790).

That which followed outdid this carnage. The officers of the Châteauvieux regiment, who, according to the capitulation of the Swiss cantons with France, were entitled to judge their own men, hanged twenty-one of them, made the twenty-second undergo the horrible torture of the wheel, and condemned sixty-four to the galleys. The last of those condemned to death, when stretched on the wheel, cried: "Bouillé is a traitor, I die innocent! *Vive la nation!*"

The national assembly passed a vote of thanks to Bouillé, "for having restored order," which later on they regretted. A funeral *fête* was celebrated in the Champ-de-Mars in memory of the national guards and Bouillé's soldiers who were killed in the attack on Nancy. A funeral *fête* indeed! There was a wide gulf between it and that other *fête* which the Champ-de-Mars had seen some weeks before. The Revolution was now divided against itself. Among the mass of the people there was deep rage and sorrow. Another misfortune was the diminishing popularity of La Fayette, which rapidly declined after Federation Day. La Fayette had not changed and never did change; but he deceived himself and was deceived, becoming thenceforward more and more an object of suspicion to the active and ardent portions of the revolutionary party.[o]

François Claude, Marquis de Bouillé (1739-1800)

LAST DAYS OF MIRABEAU

Many weeks of the summer of 1790 were passed by the royal family at St. Cloud; escape would have been practicable, but was not once contemplated. Hence we may infer that Louis had completely resigned himself to his humbled position, and resolved to look for no other than legislative support.

The emigrant noblesse, collecting first at Turin, afterwards at Coblenz, endeavoured with their wonted imbecility and ill success to stir up rebellion in the provinces, for which the discontent of the clergy, and consequently of the devout, gave them ample facilities. They solicited Louis to sanction their plans and join their meditated armaments. He had already suffered much by their counsels.

But how could he resist the opinions and counsel of Mirabeau, when this leader of the redoubtable assembly owned it as his opinion that royalty, in order to exist, must be raised from its present prostrate condition; that this must be effected by a force foreign to the assembly; and that the only means to bring about this end was that the king should retire to Metz, beyond the

power of the Parisians,[1] and there, at the head of an independent force, treat with the nation, and conclude some more equitable adjustment between the rights of the crown and those of the people?

Such was the plan of Mirabeau, and it gained at once the monarch's approbation. But a fatal event came to retard it, and deprive Louis of what he most wanted — a man of capacity to conduct him. Mirabeau kept his ascendency in the assembly to the last. Barnave and the Lameths in vain endeavoured to shake his supremacy. On the great question, whether the power of deciding on war or peace should rest with the monarch or the nation, Mirabeau took the monarchic side. His enemies saw the opportunity, and attacked him with a virulence and truth that would have overborne any other man. The Jacobins made use of their arm, and the "great treason of Count Mirabeau" was cried through the streets. "I had no need of this example," cried the orator, "to learn that there is but one step from the Capitol to the Tarpeian rock." Mirabeau's eloquence conquered in the assembly, and even partially exculpated him with the multitude.

The 28th of February, 1791, was the day of his most memorable triumph.[2] The émigrés, collected at Coblenz, were menacing France with their own force, and with that of the sovereigns of Europe. It was proposed to stop the tide of emigration, by intrusting the power of granting passports to a committee of three persons. Mirabeau exclaimed against such an inquisition. "As for me," cried he, "I should feel myself absolved from my oath of allegiance to any government, that had the infamy to propose this dictatorial commission. I swear it" — (loud cries interrupted him). "The popularity that I have so ambitioned, and that I have enjoyed like many others, is not a feeble reed. I will fix it deep in the earth. I will make it vegetate and live in the soil of justice and reason."

This bold allusion, more to his purposes than to the question, was received with a blind applause, that maddened the popular leaders. They cried out against Mirabeau as a dictator. "Silence, ye thirty voices!" was his overwhelming rejoinder. His last triumph was his greatest. The orator died, like a general, in his crowning victory. He returned thence to a bed of sickness, from which he never arose. That organic disease of the heart, supposed principally to affect men of strong passions, carried him off.[b]

At the news of Mirabeau's illness not only the people of Paris, the court, the revolutionists, but all men of all parties had been seized with profound consternation. Yet Mirabeau supported the attacks of pain with great fortitude, while friends greedily drank in his words. "You are a great doctor," said he to the materialistic Cabanis, "but there is one who is greater — He who made the wind which overthrows all things, the water which penetrates and fertilises all, the fire which purifies all." This was the only homage he rendered to the deity. "Support my head," said he to his valet, "it is the strongest head in France, I wish I could leave it to you."

A noise of artillery just then came to him: "They are celebrating the funeral feast of Achilles." Then, returning to the state of the country, he

[1 There he might be supported by the department not at the mercy of the Paris mob, or of the convention which the mob controlled. Marie Antoinette's influence was probably bad. She hated Mirabeau and was plotting with the émigrés. The insincerity of the king, and especially that of the queen, largely accounted for the loss of confidence by the people in the royal pair.]

[2 It was that of La Fayette also, who in the morning attacked and dispersed an insurrectionary force that menaced Vincennes, and in the evening disconcerted a similar kind of movement of the royalists who frequented the Tuileries. Thus, inside and outside the national assembly, the leaders of the middle class were triumphant over those of the lower orders. The death of Mirabeau and the unsuccessful flight of the king destroyed this superiority.]

said with effort: "Monarchy is buried with me, the factions can only destroy the relics of it." Another time, he said, "The man who will gain most by my death will be Mr. Pitt, for I do not know anyone else in Europe who can counterbalance his power." "What epitaphs," he said again, "will they place on my tomb?" Feeling himself growing weaker and weaker, he said to those around him, "Clear away these sad surroundings, replace these useless medicine flasks by flowers. Take care of my hair. Surround me with perfumes. Let me hear the sounds of harmonious music." He drew his last breath on April 2nd, 1791.

The assembly decided to go in a body to the funeral. Never were obsequies celebrated with more pomp. There was general mourning for eight days and at the end came the climax of this fleeting glory. The assembly decreed that the church of St. Geneviève should thenceforth be consecrated to the burial of citizens whom their country wished to honour, and that Mirabeau should be the first to be interred in its vaults. The church was thenceforth known as the Panthéon; on the porch ran this inscription: "To illustrious men, from a grateful country (*Aux grands hommes, la patrie reconnaissante*)."

Later on, a decree of 1793 ordered the statue of Mirabeau to be veiled until his memory could be cleared. Then, one night, two police officers carried off his corpse and buried it in a cemetery only used for the interment of criminals.*f*

SOREL'S ESTIMATE OF MIRABEAU

Mirabeau surveyed Europe with as firm and penetrating a glance as that with which he looked at the interior of France. He did not content himself with designing a plan, but selected the most suitable man for carrying it out. This was the future negotiator of the Treaty of Vienna, Talleyrand. In the month of October, 1789, he proposes him as the man best fitted to inherit the succession of Vergennes. All his policy tends towards neutrality and the maintenance of the defensive. France has only one sure ally, Spain, who has the same interests and the same enemy — England. "The enmity of England will be eternal. It will grow each year with the products of her industry or, rather, with ours." Mirabeau had all the same conceived an idea of coming to an understanding with England, but renounced it in face of the hostility that she showed. To gain the English, it would have been necessary to renounce the commercial interests of France.

Mirabeau said: "Just so much as the French Revolution rallies the majority of nations round legitimate authority in well-constituted and peaceably organised countries, just so much does she put in peril governments that are purely arbitrary and despotic, or those which have recently experienced great commotions. Thus the example of the French Revolution only produced in England a greater respect for the law, a greater rigidity in discipline and social hierarchy. Burke has said that French politics is practically a great emptiness. Burke said a most foolish thing. The emptiness is that of a volcano, in which one should never forget there are subterranean disturbances and forthcoming eruptions.

"Everyone in France and out of it makes mistakes concerning our nation. It is not to be expected nor hoped that a just idea can be formed in France of our position in Europe, nor in Europe a just idea of our situation. Because we are feverish, we think ourselves strong, because we are ill, foreigners think us dying. We deceive ourselves, and they deceive themselves equally. If France is wise and understands her own welfare, she can form federations that

are worth more than any conquests. Thus by the force alone of a good constitution we shall soon gain the Rhine borders, and, what is more, an invincible influence over all the governments of Europe by the amelioration and the greater prosperity of the human race."

The design was powerfully conceived, but lacked an executor, and the means that Mirabeau proposed were miserable and contradictory. He could not find an impulse for this grand work in intrigue and corruption. He prepared the restoration of monarchy as one plans a sedition. It was a lofty way of founding a royal democracy, of regenerating a dynasty by revolution, of giving to reconstructed power civil liberty and equality guaranteed by political liberty; but it was a strange and scandalous idea to nourish democracy by wounding her at her birth and to guarantee liberty by abusing it. Mirabeau's plan took a formidable and repulsive form that overstepped the limit of humanity. Mirabeau never looked behind him, but always in front. When he seemed to unite in himself by a sort of terrible resurrection Macchiavelli, Father Joseph, and Richelieu, he foreshadowed the consulate of Bonaparte and the ministry of Fouché. But to attain this he would have suppressed ten years of history, and what history—victorious anarchy, regicide, demagogic tyranny, committees of inquisition, the Terror which crushed the brave, the Directory which let corruption reign, the ruin of illusion, the lowering of principle, universal disgust for liberty, an irresistible hunger for peace, order, and authority; that is to say, the effects of the Revolution he wished to control, and which would only be controlled by his own weakening.

Neither the king nor the assembly could, in 1790, penetrate the designs of Mirabeau. The king was too short-sighted, the assembly too chimerical. Both knew too little of politics and had too much goodness to deliver themselves into the hands of this monstrous operator. He frightened them. The king dared not summon him to the ministry, the assembly made a law expressly to keep him out. "An eloquent genius seduces and subdues you," cried Lanjuinais; "what would he not do if he were minister?" "I should be," answered Mirabeau, "that which I have always been, the defender of monarchical power regulated by law, and the apostle of liberty guaranteed by monarchical power."

The fatality of his life so willed it that to his country's misfortune he was to his last days only a mighty tribune, condemned even by his own genius to succeed against his own plans, to excite the people whom he professed to control, to hasten the fall of a monarchy he wished to save, to become suspected both at the court by the favour he possessed in the assembly, and in the assembly by the favour they attributed to him at court. He had conceived a deep-laid plan of corruption of which he was the first dupe and victim.

He wasted the treasures of his magnificent genius in orgies of thought and excess of sordid labour. His fine character was blunted, and although the die had been finely graved the metal was rusted and eaten.

Mirabeau's contemporaries saw only his follies, weaknesses, and vices. His thoughts passed over without penetrating them; his words moved but did not convince them. He led them on when he appealed to their passions; he was powerless to moderate this passion when he appealed to their reason. The truth was, they knew him too intimately, he made himself too cheap, was known in too many little adventures, he had vaunted himself too much, his reputation was too soiled for them to confide in him or to seek in the agitator of yesterday the saviour of to-morrow. There was lacking in him that charm of the unknown, the mystery of isolation and all that prestige of

hidden virtue of which men have need who seek to be masters of others. Madame de Staël[q] said: "Mirabeau, by his overpowering eloquence, tried to reach that topmost rung from which his immorality had banished him."

Alas! the first rank he coveted was closed to him and he knew it. His intimate friends had seen him more than once shedding hot tears over the mistakes of his youth—mistakes which cut him off from gaining the confidence of the French people. "A strange destiny, mine, to be the mover of a revolution, and always between a hut and a palace," cried he in one of his moments of depression. It was a shadowy palace he entered, by a half-opened door and a servant's staircase. The court, which saw in Mirabeau only a conspirator, expected nothing from him but plots. All that grand ministry *à la Richelieu* of which he had conceived, was reduced in practice to the occult direction of a secret police.[e]

AN ENGLISH ESTIMATE OF MIRABEAU (H. MORSE STEPHENS)

From the month of May, 1790, to his death in April, 1791, Mirabeau remained in close and suspected but not actually proved connection with the court, and drew up many admirable state-papers for it. In return the court paid his debts;[1] but it ought never to be said that he was bribed, for the gold of the court never made him swerve from his political principles—never, for instance, made him a royalist. He regarded himself as a minister, though an unavowed one, and believed himself worthy of his hire. Undoubtedly his character would have been more admirable if he had acted without court assistance, but it must be remembered that his services deserved some reward, and that by remaining at Paris as a politician he had been unable to realise his paternal inheritance.

With Mirabeau died, it has been said, the last hope of the monarchy; but, with Marie Antoinette supreme at court, can it be said that there could ever have been any real hope for the monarchy? Had she been but less like her imperious mother, Louis would have made a constitutional monarch, but her will was as strong as Mirabeau's own, and the Bourbon monarchy had to meet its fate. The subsequent events of the Revolution justified Mirabeau's prognostications in his first *mémoire* of October 15th, 1789.

No man ever so thoroughly used other men's work, and yet made it all seem his own. Yet neither the gold of the court nor another man's conviction would make Mirabeau say what he did not himself believe, or do what he did not himself think right. He took other men's labour as his due, and impressed their words, of which he had suggested the underlying ideas, with the stamp of his own individuality; his collaborators themselves did not complain; they were but too glad to be of help in the great work of controlling the French Revolution through its greatest thinker and orator.

There was something gigantic about all Mirabeau's thoughts and deeds. The excesses of his youth were beyond all bounds, and severely were they punished; his vanity was immense, but never spoiled his judgment; his talents were enormous, but he could yet make use of those of others. As a statesman his wisdom is indubitable, but by no means universally recognised in his own country. Lovers of the *ancien régime* abuse its most formidable and logical opponent; believers in the constituent assembly cannot be expected to care for the most redoubtable adversary of their favourite theorists,

[1 It was the count de la Marck who, at Marie Antoinette's suggestion and in her name, paid Mirabeau's debts of 208,000 livres, and gave him four promissory notes for 250,000 livres each, to be paid if he kept his promises to the court.]

while admirers of the republic of every description agree in calling him, from his connection with the court, the traitor Mirabeau. As an orator more justice has been done him. Personally he had that which is the truest mark of nobility of mind — a power of attracting love, and winning faithful friends. "I always loved him," writes Sir Gilbert Elliot to his brother Hugh; and Romilly,[t] who was not given to lavish praise, says, "I have no doubt that in his public conduct, as in his writings, he was desirous of doing good, that his ambition was of the noblest kind, and that he proposed to himself the noblest ends." What more favourable judgment could be passed on an ambitious man — what finer epitaph could a statesman desire?[r]

CHAPTER VIII

THE FALL OF THE MONARCHY

[1791–1792 A.D.]

That immense upheaval, known as the French Revolution, was really only a movement which affected, in varying degrees, the whole of western Europe. It was a consequence of the advance of civilisation which led society, towards the end of the eighteenth century, — and because of the philosophy of that century, — to the difficult passage from a lower to a higher state. Theology and militarism were to give place to science and industry. The two groups of secondary philosophers who led in this great age were those who followed Voltaire and Rousseau, one school attacking the altar, one the throne. Both in common with the original school — that of Diderot and the Encyclopædists — tended towards the overthrow of the ancient régime, although only the constructive group desired a systematic reorganisation without God or king, and the establishment of a state in which science and industry should replace theology and war. — ROBINET.[c]

THE great philosophical school of the eighteenth century, with Diderot as its chief representative in France, comprised: the cosmologist group, Clairaut, D'Alembert, Monge, Lagrange, Laplace, Lavoisier, Guyton de Morveau, Berthollet, Vicq-d'Azyr, Buffon, Lamarck, etc., who had already far advanced natural philosophy and natural science; the socialist group, Montesquieu, Turgot, Condorcet, Quesnay, Gournay, the elder Mirabeau, etc., who had definitely defined political science; and the moralist group, Diderot, D'Holbach, Georges Leroy, De Brosses, etc., who had more especially devoted themselves to the study of the human mind. This immortal phalanx of savants and philosophers was not confined to France. The same lines of thought were followed by Priestley, Beccaria, Kant, and above all, by David Hume — that great genius who, like Diderot, gave himself up to most profound reflections on politics, morals, and philosophy.

But the immediate and almost fatal disproportion between the swift decomposition of the old régime and the building up of the new, brought about the western upheaval and led to a social crisis. There was, so to speak, a stifled aspiration towards a higher social state, an aspiration which carried in it a death-blow to the old state of affairs, but which, for the time being, presented but did not solve the problem of actual reorganisation. Such was, then, the character of this eventful period of history, and it acted as the principal cause for the viciousness which followed the Revolution with its incomplete results.

But although the need of reform was common to all the West—that is, to all great nations which since the days of Charlemagne had united in the work of general civilisation, namely, France, Italy, Spain, England, and Germany, as the efforts of the Pombals, the Campomanes, the Arandas, Joseph II, and above all of Frederick the Great proved—it was in France that the efforts were most strongly marked. The double movement of decomposing the old régime, of emancipation from theology and politics; and the recomposition of the new régime, that is, the simultaneous development of industry, science, and philosophy, was there the most advanced, and this was the reason why she took the initiative in the crisis, or French Revolution. But the fundamentally organic doctrine necessary to determine the true character of the reconstruction was then neither constituted nor widely spread. A negative philosophy, or a revolutionary one, elaborated during three previous centuries, alone presented itself as a director in the movement.

It might be thought—giving human nature more mental power than it really has, and to the leaders in politics more foresight and wisdom than they usually possess—that the French Revolution should have operated systematically from above, that is, from a government sufficiently awake and devoted to the public good.

This hypothesis is more legitimate than at first sight it appears. If, for example, the great Frederick had arisen in the place of Louis XVI, or if the latter had only been capable, like Louis XIII with Richelieu, of submitting to a minister so apt to understand the nature, extent, and execution of an indispensable regeneration of the empire, all might have moved smoothly. A solution eminently favourable to the success of the Revolution would have consisted in the coming to the French throne of a king who spontaneously, or acting under his chief minister, would have firmly and voluntarily transformed the highest monarchical powers, the retrograde dictatorship of Louis XIV and Louis XV into a progressive one.

Mignet[b] certainly had some such idea when, in speaking of Louis XVI, he said, "In this way he could have insured his safety from the excesses of a revolution, by himself acting. If, taking the initiative in changed times, he had fixed with firmness but with justice the new order of things; if only he had realised the wishes of France and determined what were the rights of citizens, the attributes of the states-generals, the limits of royal power; if he had left off arbitrating for his own interests, for favours for the aristocracy, for personal privileges; if, in fact, he had accomplished those reforms claimed by public opinion, this resolution would have prevented most disastrous consequences at a later date."

Turgot wanted exactly, or nearly so, that which was effected later, in spite of the king, by a constitutional assembly. All that he projected was realisable, and it would have been much better if, in the place of Louis XVI, men could have been found like Frederick of Prussia or Louis XIII. That

is why an hypothesis of a revolution beginning from above—by Turgot assisted by men of '89 called to rule—is not a decadent theory.

But Turgot found all the privileged classes of the old régime as obstacles in his way to reformation—all the royal favourites, clergy, nobles, parliamentarians, financiers, and, finally, the court itself with Marie Antoinette at the head, she leading the king to resist, although at first he formally sanctioned all reforms. Turgot was overthrown. The responsibility for his fall rests with Louis XVI, and remains as one of his greatest political mistakes.

Through this mistake, or rather by this first social crime, the Revolution thenceforth worked feverishly from below—that is, outside and against the government, by efforts growing more violent and spontaneous in proportion to the resistance encountered.[c]

MIRABEAU'S SUCCESSORS

After Mirabeau's death, Danton became as it were his successor, but he moved in a lower sphere; and externally, in knowledge as well as in importance, was so little distinguished in the circles in which his dreadful and thundering voice was not regarded as eloquence, that the court did not attempt to secure him by bribery and corruption till it was too late; he then put the money in his pocket, but rendered no service in return. Mirabeau and Talleyrand, as well as Danton, had need of the Revolution as a means of escaping the importunity of their creditors and of obtaining new resources to meet their colossal expenditure; in the highest circles they required hundreds of thousands, whilst Danton among his equals, corrupt advocates and adventurers, only needed thousands. He had purchased a place in the royal court, but had not paid the purchase-money, and was in daily apprehension of being thrown into prison for debt.

DANTON

Mirabeau's eyes had no sooner been closed than he, Camille Desmoulins, and their companions in the clubs of the Cordeliers, became more powerful than La Fayette, Bailly, and the frequenters of Madame de Staël's salons; this appeared on the 18th of April, 1791.

La Fayette was desirous of proving to the world and the king that the latter was not the prisoner of the populace, although in fact the people had prevented him in the autumn of 1790 and at Easter, 1791, from proceeding to St. Cloud and receiving the sacrament of the Eucharist from a non-juring priest; the general maintained that the king must rely upon him and the national guards. The attempt was made; but the three republican parties of the Jacobins, the philosophical and rhetorical doctrinaires called Girondists,—

the favourers of a sovereign democracy of the lowest class, of whom Marat was the organ and Robespierre the orator, — and the clever and desperate disturbers of public order belonging to the club of the Cordeliers, were then all united and remained so for two years, and were consequently far superior to the eloquent and distinguished constitutionalists.

This superiority was made manifest on the 18th of April, when La Fayette attempted to conduct the king to St. Cloud under the protection of the national guard. The Jacobins had filled the streets with women and pikemen consisting of the dregs of the people, who made a regular opposition to the national guards and mingled in their ranks; the king's progress was obstructed, and it was found impossible to penetrate the mass; the infantry of the national guard remained inactive, and La Fayette issued orders to the cavalry to draw their swords and open a way through the opposing throng; they however refused to obey. La Fayette himself was then obliged to announce to the king that he must return. This failure produced a deep impression upon the general, who immediately resigned his command, and could only be persuaded to resume it after the lapse of three days.

It is now sufficiently proved from the writings formerly published in foreign countries, and in still greater numbers during the restoration in France, and even by the ringleaders of the conspiracies themselves, what an unholy activity the adherents and friends of the old régime at that time displayed. These persons drove the king to the adoption of measures the very opposite of his public declarations; they showed him to be weak and equivocal, injured him, and furnished his enemies with the opportunity of utterly destroying the monarchy itself. The committee of the Jacobins who superintended the police, and the corresponding committee of the national assembly, were informed of everything which was carried on at foreign courts in the busy year 1791 in the name of the queen, the king, the princes, and émigrés; the excited nation was offended in its honour by the declarations of the foreign powers, and willingly threw itself into the hands of the enemies of the existing monarchy. Meanwhile the king was importuned by his partisans to escape from the hands of the Parisian demagogues, and to take refuge in some fortified town on the frontiers; for no idea was at first entertained of a flight beyond the limits of the country.

As long as the count of Artois and the whole body of émigrés remained in Turin, the plan was to bring the king to Lyons; but when the emperor Leopold gave promises, the elector of Treves allowed the émigrés to assemble in Worms and Coblenz, and King Gustavus of Sweden entered into correspondence with them. It was then thought desirable that the king should take refuge in some fortress on the eastern or northern frontier of the kingdom. Long before Mirabeau's death, negotiations respecting a flight had been carried on with the marquis de Bouillé, the commander-in-chief of the army in Nancy.

There were, in fact, whole volumes written on the various plans of effecting an escape, and the printed secret correspondence proves how actively these plans were agitated. They were however only seriously pursued after Mirabeau's death. In this affair the weak king was the mere instrument of his wife, his brother, and the ancient aristocracy, who had just then lost all influence among the people. The emperor Leopold played a very equivocal part, for he excited great attention by his negotiations with Prussia and with the French court, without any serious intention to lend speedy and effectual assistance.[d]

THE KING TAKES TO FLIGHT

Six hundred *sectionnaires* kept constant watch over the castle. Bayonets bristled everywhere, even in the passages leading from the king and queen's private rooms. Spies mingled with the royal attendants, and were to be suspected from the first lady-in-waiting down to the lowest footman.

Unhappy royalty! — reduced to using certain signs instead of speech, for the very walls listened and heard. But hope was not abandoned. It was arranged between Bouillé and his master that the place of retreat should be Montmédy, a fortified town on the Champagne borders. There they would be almost in the emperor's territory, in the neighbourhood of Luxemburg, and in case of emergency the Austrians would be ready with help.

There was in the basement of the Tuileries an apartment which opened on the Cour des Princes and the Cour Royale. Neither of these exits was guarded. If an escape were possible it would be by one of them. The queen charged Count Fersen, a young Swedish nobleman who rendered her most poetic worship, to have horses and carriages ready. Three of the bodyguard were chosen as couriers. A passport that would serve for all the royal family was absolutely necessary. By a lucky coincidence Baroness Korff, a friend of the count of Fersen, had just had a passport made out for herself, two children, a valet, and two maids. Fersen had not much difficulty in persuading Madame de Korff to pretend that she had inadvertently dropped this in the fire and to ask for another.

Bouillé had mentioned Count d'Argoult to the king as a man suited to act in emergencies and full of courage and ready wit, but this place in the carriage was loudly claimed by Madame de Tourzel, the children's governess. She claimed it by right! And, such was the absurdity of court etiquette, that her right was absolutely inviolable. So Madame de Tourzel took the title of Baroness Korff. The queen was to be the governess and take the name of Madame Rochet. It was arranged that Princess Elizabeth should be Rosalie, lady's companion, and Louis XVI, under the name of Durand, should play the part of a valet. Count Fersen was to be coachman from Paris to Bondy.

But all was miserably bungled in these preparations. It was absurd to take as couriers three young men of the bodyguard knowing nothing of the roads, instead of three real couriers. The latter would have known the route, have had no appearances to keep up, would have urged on the postillions and spoken in the same style. The royal family almost betrayed themselves in advance. If only these bodyguards had known Paris! Not even that! And, what was more absurd, Fersen, the coachman, did not know it either! But, added to this, one might have thought they were bent on blundering. One of the queen's chief solicitudes—who will believe it? — was to have a complete trousseau for her own and the children's use in Brussels! Charged to buy it or have it made, Madame Campan e relates how she was obliged to go out almost disguised, and buy six chemises in one shop and six in another; here dresses, there dressing-gowns. All one evening was spent packing up diamonds.

At the same time, with singular inconsequence, dissimulation took the form of downright lies. Louis XVI formally declared to General Rochambeau that he had no intention of leaving Paris, and he said this with such apparent sincerity that Madame de Lamballe told it to her doctor, M. Staëffert. But the veil of mystery with which they sought to hide their intentions was constantly torn aside by themselves.

Suddenly a terrible blow fell. Marat, with his prophetic pen (prophetic in the popular estimation), let fall therefrom these startling words:

A person attached to the royal household has found the king weeping in his own room and trying to hide his grief at being forced to go to the Low Countries under the pretext that his cause is the same as that of all the kings in Europe. You are idiotic enough not to foresee the flight of the royal family. Parisians! foolish Parisians, I am tired of telling you to keep the king and the dauphin within your walls. Guard them carefully; shut up the Austrian woman, her brother-in-law, and the rest of the family. The loss of a single day may be fatal to the nation and dig a grave for three million Frenchmen.

Here is the explanation: among the patriots who furnished *l'Ami du Peuple* with news was a certain Javardin, the lover of a laundress having among her customers several court ladies. This woman found in the dress pocket of one of these ladies-in-waiting a letter half torn up, but decipherable: "The papers are ready, they are getting the carriages ready for starting." The laundress gave this letter to Javardin, who showed it to Marat! Suspicion, moreover, was awakening on all sides. Bailly kept the secret at the risk of proving traitor to the people. La Fayette and Gouvion-Saint-Ayr imitated him, but became doubly careful.

A delay of twenty-four hours happened because one of the dauphin's ladies was taken ill, and her substitute was strongly suspected of Jacobinism; therefore it was considered better to wait. Such a *contretemps* was a real misfortune. It necessitated fresh orders, and one of the inconveniences was prolonging the stay of Bouillé's troops along the road, just where their presence was likely to bring on the dreaded storm.

The day of departure having arrived, the queen, to allay suspicion, went for a drive on the boulevard with her sister and son. Towards half past ten, the king and queen having supped as usual retired as if going to bed. As soon as they imagined all asleep they went to Madame Royale's apartments. "My brother," relates this princess with touching simplicity, "was dressed as a little girl. As he was not nearly awake he did not know what was going on. I asked him what he thought we were going to do. 'We are going to act, because we are dressed up,' he answered."

Louis XVI, who was to pass as Madame de Korff's valet, wore a gray suit and a wig. Count Fersen awaited the fugitives, sitting as coachman on the seat of a hired carriage. The dauphin, with the *insouciance* of his age, curled himself up to sleep.

Unfortunately, neither the queen nor her guide knew Paris. After having hopelessly lost their way they were obliged to ask it of a sentinel on the bridge. They turned back, having lost much time, when perhaps an hour, a minute, gained meant safety.

At last all were in the carriage. The horses which were to bear them from the Revolution tore along under the whip. They were really gone! The travelling *berline* was awaiting them at the St. Martin barrier. All got in and left the hired carriage, horsed and harnessed, in the street, without anyone to drive it back to its owner. Fersen held the reins as far as Bondy, to which place the royal family had been preceded by two waiting-maids and a royal carriage. The postillion who had driven it there was not a little astonished to see a man dressed as a coachman descend from his box and take leave in an elegant and affectionate manner of the people he had driven, then get into a beautiful carriage, which apparently belonged to him, to go back to Paris.

Two carriages, nine travellers, eleven horses, three couriers in bright yellow waistcoats, one on the box, one galloping by the door, a third hurrying on to command relays, and all this without taking any precautions, on a route haunted by the phantom of emigration, where thousands of men were suspicious even to madness!

All Paris was up at daybreak on the 21st of June, for the fatal news was spreading from mouth to mouth that the royal servants had found the king and queen's apartments deserted. In crowded streets, in the market, in stirring faubourg, in shop doors, the citizens met with the same words: "Well, so he is gone!" Astonishment, anxiety, anger, were the first feelings of the hour. How had they fled? Where had they gone? Who were their accomplices? Had La Fayette, the traitor, shut his eyes? But with what terrible plot was this departure connected! Was France to perish, strangled between a civil and a foreign war? Oh, this Louis XVI! this king who had pretended to be so honest, who swore so many times that he was not going away! So this was how kings kept their word! The assembly met hastily. The municipality officially announced the king's flight by three cannon-shots. Orders were given to put seals on the Tuileries. No one was to leave Paris.

Troops were everywhere called out. The famous pikes used on the 14th of July, now refound, were greeted on the place de Grève by thunders of applause. At the roll of the drums the *invalides* of the Gros-Caillou hôpital forced the guard, seized their swords, and, dressed in their uniforms, went out to defend their country. The woollen caps reappeared, this time eclipsing the bearskin ones. An immense crowd went to the Tuileries and took possession of it.

But to various other parties the king's escape was a general source of satisfaction, although for very different reasons. The nobles, priests, and courtiers waited with carefully veiled satisfaction to see a foreign sword cut this Gordian knot which they themselves were impotent to untie. The constitutionalists hoped to compel Louis XVI to accept a constitution more easily now that he had lost all other title to a crown. The republicans reckoned on proving that the monarch's flight was an annulling of the contract between him and the people, and so equivalent to an abdication.*f*

LOUIS TAKEN PRISONER

The carriage bearing the royal family reached Châlons in safety, and subsequently Ste. Menehould. The detachments of Bouillé, weary of waiting, had already taken their departure. At Ste. Menehould Louis was recognised by Drouet, son of the postmaster; but the carriage was then setting off. Drouet set off also by a cross-road, and reached Varennes, the next place of halt, and within but two stages of Bouillé's camp, before the fugitives. There were no post-horses in Varennes, but an officer of Bouillé was appointed to have a relay in waiting. There were no symptoms of horses or guards about the hour of eleven at night when the royal family entered the town. They were obliged to alight, to question, to parley with the postillions; whilst Drouet had aroused the municipal officer, and called together the national guards of the canton. Whilst the carriage was slowly proceeding under an arch that crossed the road, Drouet, with the well-known Billaud, and one or two others, stopped it, demanding their passports. The *gardes du corps* on the box wished to resist. The king forbade them. Here the presence of a man of resolution was wanted.*g*

"Alas, it was not in the poor phlegmatic man," says Carlyle. "Had it been in him, French History had never come under this Varennes Archway to

decide itself.—He steps out; all step out. Procureur Sausse gives his grocer-arms to the Queen and Sister Elizabeth; Majesty taking the two children by the hand. And thus they walk, coolly back, over the Market-place, to Procureur Sausse's; mount into his small upper story; where straightway his Majesty 'demands refreshments.' Demands refreshments, as is written; gets bread-and-cheese with a bottle of Burgundy; and remarks that it is the best Burgundy he ever drank!

"Meanwhile, the Varennes Notables, and all men, official and non-official, are hastily drawing on their breeches; getting their fighting gear. Mortals half-dressed tumble out barrels, lay felled trees; scouts dart off to all the four winds,—the tocsin begins clanging, 'the Village illuminates itself.' Very singular: how these little Villages do manage, so adroit are they, when startled in midnight alarm of war. Like little adroit municipal rattle-snakes, suddenly awakened: for their storm-bell rattles and rings; their eyes glisten luminous (with tallow-light), as in rattle-snake ire; and the Village will sting. Old-Dragoon Drouet is our engineer and generalissimo; valiant as a Ruy Diaz:—Now or never, ye Patriots, for the soldiery is coming; massacre by Austrians, by Aristocrats, wars more than civil, it all depends on you and the hour!—National Guards rank themselves, half-buttoned: mortals, we say, still only in breeches, in under-petticoat, tumble out barrels and lumber, lay felled trees for barricades: the Village will sting. Rabid Democracy, it would seem, is not confined to Paris, then? Ah no, whatsoever Courtiers might talk; too clearly no. This of dying for one's King is grown into a dying for one's self, against the King, if need be." *h*

The royal prisoners were now conducted before the procureur of the town; and, the national guards crowding in, Louis was arrested. The troops of Bouillé's army arrived also, but refused to rescue him. An aide-de-camp of General La Fayette soon after made his appearance, bearing a decree of the national assembly for the re-conveyance of the fugitives to Paris.

Thus, within an hour, a league of safety, the unfortunate Louis and his family found themselves captive, and on their return to a capital, which, if it had before loaded them with contumely, would now, most likely, observe no moderation in cruelty. The assembly already showed that its opinions had taken a deeper dye of republicanism since the flight. Pétion, a rude and rigid democrat, with Barnave, the rival of Mirabeau, were the commissaries who re-conducted the king. Seated in the royal carriage, Barnave, with the sensibility ever attendant upon talent, felt his sympathy awakened for the sufferings of the fallen family.

During the eight days of their painful journey, he continually conversed with the monarch, and felt each moment deeper respect for a character so amiable and so just. Pétion, on the contrary, a man with few ideas, held rigid in those which he professed, and piqued by being obliged to play an inferior part, merely murmured that he cared for naught save a republic. Previous to the return of the king to Paris, it was placarded that whoever insulted him should be beaten; whoever applauded him should be hanged. He was received, then, with that silence which Mirabeau called "the lesson of kings." *g*

CARLYLE ON THE KING'S RETURN

On the Sixth of October gone a year, King Louis, escorted by Demoiselle Théroigne and some two hundred thousand, made a Royal Progress and Entrance into Paris, such as man had never witnessed; we prophesied him Two more such; and accordingly another of them, after this flight to Metz,

is now coming to pass. Théroigne will not escort here; neither does Mirabeau now "sit in one of the accompanying carriages." Mirabeau lies dead, in the Pantheon of Great Men. Théroigne lies living, in dark Austrian Prison; having gone to Liège, professionally, and been seized there.

Smile of embarrassment, or cloud of dull sourness, is on the broad phlegmatic face of his Majesty; who keeps declaring to the successive Official-persons, what is evident, "*Eh bien, me voilà* (Well, here you have me);" and what is not evident, "I do assure you I did not mean to pass the frontiers"; and so forth: speeches natural for that poor Royal Man; which Decency would veil. Silent is her Majesty, with a look of grief and scorn; natural for that Royal Woman.

Thus lumbers and creeps the ignominious Royal Procession, through many streets, amid a silent-gazing people. It is not comic; ah no, it is comico-tragic; with bound Couriers, and a Doom hanging over it; most fantastic, yet most miserably real.

MAXIMILIAN MARIE ISIDORE ROBESPIERRE (1758–1794)

On Monday night Royalty went; on Saturday evening it returns: so much, within one short week, has Royalty accomplished for itself. The Pickleherring Tragedy has vanished in the Tuileries Palace, towards "pain strong and hard." Watched, fettered, and humbled, as Royalty never was. Watched even in its sleeping-apartments and inmost recesses: for it has to sleep with door set ajar, blue National Argus watching, his eye fixed on the Queen's curtains; nay, on one occasion, as the Queen cannot sleep, he offers to sit by her pillow, and converse a little, says Madame Campan!

In regard to all which, this most pressing question arises: What is to be done with it? Depose it! resolutely answer Robespierre and the thorough-going few. For, truly, with a King who runs away, and needs to be watched in his very bedroom that he may stay and govern you, what other reasonable thing can be done? Had Philippe d'Orléans not been a *caput mortuum!* But of him, known as one defunct, no man now dreams. Depose it not; say that it is inviolable, that it was spirited away, was *enlevé;* at any cost of sophistry and solecism, re-establish it! so answer with loud vehemence all manner of Constitutional Royalists; as all your pure Royalists do naturally likewise, with low vehemence, and rage compressed by fear, still more passionately answer. Nay Barnave and the two Lameths, and what will follow them, do likewise answer so. Answer, with their whole might: terrorstruck at the unknown Abysses on the verge of which, driven thither by themselves mainly, all now reels, ready to plunge.

By mighty effort and combination, this latter course is the course fixed on; and it shall by the strong arm, if not by the clearest logic, be made

good. With the sacrifice of all their hard-earned popularity, this notable Triumvirate, says Toulongeon,[i] "set the Throne up again, which they had so toiled to overturn: as one might set up an overturned pyramid, on its vertex"; to stand so long as it is held.

Unhappy France; unhappy in King, Queen, and Constitution; one knows not in which unhappiest! Was the meaning of our so glorious French Revolution this, and no other, That when Shams and Delusions, long soul-killing, had become body-killing, and got the length of Bankruptcy and Inanition, a great People rose and, with one voice, said, in the Name of the Highest: Shams shall be no more?

Petition after Petition, forwarded by Post, or borne in Deputation, comes praying for Judgment and *Déchéance*, which is our name for Deposition; praying, at lowest, for Reference to the Eighty-three Departments of France. Hot Marseillese Deputation comes declaring, among other things: "Our Phocean Ancestors flung a Bar of Iron into the Bay at their first landing; this Bar will float again on the Mediterranean brine before we consent to be slaves." All this for four weeks or more, while the matter still hangs doubtful; Emigration streaming with double violence over the frontiers; France seething in fierce agitation of this question and prize-question: What is to be done with the fugitive Hereditary Representative? Finally, on Friday, the 15th of July, 1791, the National Assembly decides.[h]

THE KING'S CAPTIVITY AND THE PILLNITZ DECLARATION

The effect of the flight to Varennes was to destroy all respect for the king, to accustom the minds of men to his absence, and to stimulate the idea of a republic. Previous to the morning of his arrival, the assembly had provided for the emergency of the case by a decree. Louis XVI was suspended from his functions, and a guard assigned for his person, for that of the queen, and for that of the dauphin. This guard was made responsible for their safety. The greatest nicety was observed in the expressions, for never did that assembly betray a want of attention to delicacy: but the fact itself was not to be disguised — the king was provisionally dethroned.

Barnave dictated the king's answer to the commissioners named by the assembly. In that document, Louis XVI grounded his flight upon the desire to learn more accurately the state of public opinion, which he alleged to have closely studied during his journey; and he demonstrated by a series of facts that it was never his intention to leave France. As to the protests contained in his memorial delivered to the assembly, he said, with much reason, that they bore, not upon the fundamental principles of the constitution, but upon the means of execution which were permitted him. Now, he added, that the general desire was made manifest to him, he did not hesitate to submit to it, and to make all the sacrifices necessary for the general welfare.

Bouillé, with the view of drawing on his head the whole rage of the assembly, addressed to it a letter, which might be called insane, if the generous motive which prompted it were not considered. He avowed himself the sole instigator of the king's journey, whilst he had in fact opposed it; and he declared, in the name of the allied sovereigns, that Paris should answer for the safety of the royal family, and that the least injury perpetrated on it should be avenged in a signal manner. He added, what he knew to be inconsistent with fact, that the military resources of France were utterly exhausted; furthermore, that he was acquainted with the ways of invasion,

and would himself conduct the foreign armies into the bosom of his country. The assembly lent itself to this generous bravado, and threw the whole odium upon Bouillé, who had nothing to fear, as he had already passed to the enemy.

The court of Spain, apprehensive that the slightest hostile demonstration might expose the royal family to greater dangers, declared to the French government that its friendly dispositions were unchanged. The northern powers conducted themselves with less reserve: excited by the émigrés, they assumed a threatening tone. Envoys were despatched to Brussels and Coblenz, to attempt an understanding with the émigrés, to communicate to them the friendly spirit of the assembly, and the hope of the possibility of an advantageous arrangement. But they were outrageously insulted, and immediately returned to Paris.

The émigrés levied troops in the king's name, and thus compelled him to give a formal disavowal. They pretended that Monsieur, then with them, was regent of the kingdom; and that the king, being a prisoner, had no longer a will of his own. They concluded that all the powers of Europe were at their disposition. They could not doubt that an invasion must succeed. And yet nearly two years were gone since they had quitted France; and in spite of their daily sanguine hopes, they had not yet returned as conquerors, according to their flattering anticipations. The powers seemed to promise much: but Pitt was awaiting events: Leopold, exhausted by war, and discontented with the émigrés, was disposed to peace; the king of Prussia, certainly, held out hopes, but he had little interest in gratifying them; Gustavus was eager to lead an expedition against France, but was at an inconvenient distance; and Catherine, who might have assisted him, though delivered from the Turks, had Poland to keep in subjection. Besides, in order to effect such a coalition, so many interests required to be brought into harmony that it needed a sanguine temperament to anticipate success in such a scheme.

The declaration of Pillnitz, August 27th, 1791, ought especially to have opened the eyes of the émigrés to the zeal of the sovereigns. That declaration, published conjointly by the king of Prussia and the emperor Leopold, imported that the situation of the king of France was a matter of common interest to all monarchs, and that they were imperiously called upon to exert their united powers to assure Louis XVI the means of establishing a government conformable to the interests of the throne and the people. Upon that principle, the king of Prussia and the emperor expressed their readiness to co-operate with other princes to effect that desirable object. In the meantime, their forces were to be prepared for offensive operations when the emergency arrived.

France, it is true, was disarmed, but a whole nation on the alert is soon in arms; and, as the celebrated Carnot said somewhat later, "What is there impossible to twenty-five millions of men?" True it was, the officers were retiring; but they for the most part were beardless youths, promoted by favour, utterly without experience, and objects of hatred and contempt to the soldiers. Besides, the spirit imparted to all minds was soon to produce officers and generals. But at the same time it must be confessed that, without possessing the presumption so rife at Coblenz, it was not unreasonable to doubt that the resistance to be made by France to invasion would be so powerful as it subsequently proved.

The assembly, in the interim, sent commissioners to the frontiers, and ordered great preparations. All the national guards demanded to be led

against the enemy; several generals offered their services, and, amongst others, Dumouriez, who subsequently saved France in the defiles of the Argonne. Whilst directing its serious consideration to the external safety of the state, the assembly did not intermit its labours in perfecting the constitutional act, nor the less hasten to restore to the king his functions, and, if it might be possible, some of his prerogatives.

The new word "republic" had quickened the minds of men, already somewhat sickened of the old phrases — monarchy and constitution. The absence and suspension of the king had, as we have previously stated, shown that he was not indispensable. The newspapers and the clubs soon laid aside the respect with which his person had been hitherto treated. The Jacobins and Cordeliers agitated the question with extreme violence, and refused to understand how, after getting rid of the king, the nation should again and voluntarily impose him on itself.

A French Officer, Time of the Revolution

Numerous addresses were published. Amongst the rest was one affixed to all the walls of Paris, and even to those of the assembly. It bore the signature of Achille Duchâtelet, a young colonel. It was addressed to the French; it reminded them of the tranquillity they had enjoyed during the absence of the monarch, whence it drew the inference that it was more advantageous than his presence; adding that his desertion was an abdication, and that the nation and Louis XVI were relieved from all obligation towards each other; finally, that history was full of the crimes of kings, and that it behoved them to avoid giving themselves one again. This address, attributed to young Achille Duchâtelet, was the production of Thomas Paine, an Englishman, and a principal actor in the American Revolution. Robespierre, Pétion, and Buzot reiterated all the usual arguments against inviolability; Duport, Barnave, and Salles replied to them; and it was ultimately decreed that the king could not be brought under accusation for the offence of flight. Two articles were merely added to the decree of inviolability. So soon as this decision was pronounced, Robespierre arose, and entered his solemn protest in the name of humanity.

THE CHAMP-DE-MARS AFFAIR

On the evening which preceded this decision, there was a great tumult at the Jacobins'. A petition was drawn up, addressed to the assembly, calling upon it to declare the king deposed, as a traitor faithless to his oaths, and to provide for his substitution by all constitutional means. It was resolved that this petition should be carried the next day to the Champ-de-Mars, and laid on the altar of the country for signatures. Accordingly, it was borne in the morning to the place agreed upon; and the crowd of the seditious was swelled by that of the curious, who desired to witness the ceremony. By this time the decree was already passed, and therefore no occasion existed for any petition. La Fayette arrived, broke down the barricades already raised, had execrations and threats hurled abundantly at his head, and, finally, a shot fired at him, which, although discharged with deliberate aim, passed harmlessly by. The municipal officers, having come to his aid, ultimately prevailed on the populace to disperse. But the tumult shortly recommenced. Two invalides standing, it is unknown for what purpose, under the altar of the country, were massacred, and thereupon the disorder became universal and boundless. Bailly repaired to the Champ-de-Mars, and unfolded the red flag, in token of martial law.

The employment of force, whatever may have been alleged, was just and indispensable. New laws were desired, or they were not: if they were desired, it was necessary they should be executed; that some fixed and settled order should prevail; that insurrection should not be perpetual, and that the determinations of the assembly should not be open to modification by the *plebis-scita*[1] of the multitude. La Fayette at first ordered the national guards to fire in the air; at this menace the crowd abandoned the altar, but soon rallied again. Thus reduced to extremity, he issued his orders to fire on the multitude. The first discharge laid low certain of the most seditious. Their number was exaggerated. Some have reduced it to thirty, others have raised it to four hundred, and the furious to some thousands. The latter were believed at the time, and a general terror was infused. So severe an example silenced the agitators for a period.[m]

END OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1791)

The leading Jacobins, including Robespierre, slunk in terror to their hiding-places. This triumph, however, served but to render the assembly unpopular. The public was weary of them, and longed for its successor, as it was wont to hail a new reign. The assembly determined to show itself disinterested. It proceeded to complete and give the last touches to the constitution, the immortality of which it fondly augured. Barnave, in the access of his late loyalty, had hoped to have modified its democratic principles; and the right side, or partisans of the English constitution, are accused of having marred his efforts by their hostility or neglect.

But Barnave could never have executed his purpose. The time had gone by. And the fatal article, which excluded the present representatives from being elected members of the next assembly, was one which, in that day of affected disinterestedness, could certainly not be recalled.

Having fulfilled its task of presenting the constitution to the king, and having received his solemn acceptance of it, the *assemblée constituante* declared itself dissolved, on the 30th of September, 1791.[g]

Of this famous assembly, Thiers[m] says: "Notwithstanding its heroic courage, its scrupulous equity, its vast labours, it was execrated as revolutionary at Coblenz, and as aristocratical at Paris." Haas[k] sums it up as follows: "If the constituent assembly committed serious faults, it has also left glorious memories. Equality in the eyes of the law; civil and political liberty; the relaxing of penal law; the suppression of feudal rights; the organisation of

[1] Laws made by the people alone, without the senate, in the Roman Republic, were thus called.]

a national guard; uniformity of laws throughout the kingdom; departmental government — all these reforms are titles to a country's gratitude." And Lamartine[l] said: "The work of the assembly was prodigious, its methods insignificant. All that enthusiasm inspired it undertook and finished. Without king, military chief, dictator or army; without any force but the conviction, which it held alone in the midst of an astonished people, of a demoralised army, an emigrant aristocracy, a despoiled clergy, a hostile court, a rebellious city, and of Europe in arms, it did what it had resolved to do. To such a degree is a determined will the real power of a people, and truth the irresistible ally of the men who devote themselves to her cause. If ever inspiration was seen in the ancient prophet or legislator it may be said that the constitutional assembly had two years of continued inspiration. France was the inspired prophet of civilisation."[a]

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Had the united wisdom of the first national assembly applied itself to put together a constitution of the least possible durability, on the same principle that cardinals are wont to elect an octogenarian pope, they could scarcely have fixed upon one more likely than that decreed, to attain the desired end. Even the plan of Sieyès, that the nation should will, and the monarch execute, was more practicable, if such a monarch could be found. But here the king was left with precisely that particle of legislative power, the suspensive veto that loaded him with the responsibility of assent, and exposed him to the peril of dissent. The very originators of the system condemned and despaired of it; they knew, even before they launched it, that the vessel must founder. Still in this moment did they abdicate all power, and abandon the country to a set of new and unknown rulers.

The three natural parties of a country, those of the upper, the middle, and the lower classes, were all represented in the constituent. The Revolution, or, in other words, the descent of power through the successive ranks of society, advanced gradually and slowly: now, however, betwixt the constituent and the legislative, which followed, it proceeded *per saltum*, with astounding and fatal celerity. One great cause of this was the little experience which the country had of liberty. Men with political knowledge were rare. The notables, in this respect, had been chosen in the first assembly, and their re-election being denied, the electors were at a loss where to look. The moderate and the timid shrank at such a time from the public eye; and those whose zeal had distinguished them in the clubs, claimed and obtained universal preference. Elected under such influence, the legislative assembly soon displayed a totally new scheme of opinions and divisions.

The upholders of even a mitigated aristocracy had disappeared: in their place, as the band most favourable to royalty, sat, now in minority, the majority of the late assembly. They were called constitutionalists or *feuillants*, from the name of their club. Next in order sat the republicans. A conscientious and sage lover of royalty, to whom a monarch with kingly attributes was denied, would have embraced the idea of a republic as practicable at least, in preference to the vain idol of La Fayette's pedantic adoration, *viz.*, the name of a king and the essence of a commonwealth. The republicans were better known by the appellation of Girondins, their most celebrated leaders being members for the department of the Gironde, and originally lawyers in the court of Bordeaux. To the left of these sat the Jacobins, the anarchists, men without principles or imaginable form of government: their support

was the rabble; their aim to sweep away, as obnoxious to their envious mediocrity, the united aristocracy of birth, wealth, and talent.

The constitutionalists and Girondins both represented equally the interests of the middle class, and disputed its opinions; but the Girondins carried away the palm of popularity, and also the sceptre of power: they soon ruled the assembly, and guided the legislature. The executive at that time resided in the municipality, for Paris was in a great measure revolutionary France. The constitutionalists had held paramount influence over this body through Bailly and La Fayette; but now, when the mania of self-denial became general, these functionaries resigned, and ceded their posts of influence to their rivals. Pétion, a Girondin, was chosen mayor in lieu of Bailly, and La Fayette did not recover the command of the national guard.

Such was the state of parties. The new assembly, that gave itself the name Legislative, by which it is distinguished in French history, met on the 1st of October. A deputation waited on the king to acquaint him. His reply was simple. The republicans did not find it sufficiently courteous; and, commencing their grave duties by a childish susceptibility about punctilio, they ordered the king's chair to be put on a level with that of their president. On the next day they repealed this important decree, Louis intimating that he would not come to open their session. Having, by pretended deference, enticed him to appear, they treated him with some marks of designed disrespect, such as sitting in his presence covered — advantages trifling to them, but wounding to the pride of the fallen monarch. Thus the assembly that ended in blood began in puerility.

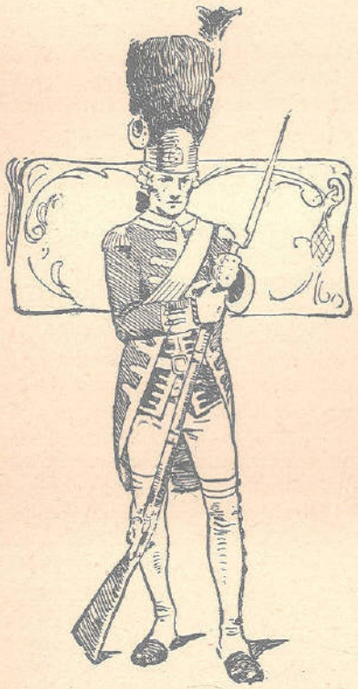
Their next steps, though more distasteful to the king, had still the excuse of necessity. Two kinds of enemies threatened the present order of things — the émigrés collected on the frontier, and the discontented priesthood scattered throughout the realm. The latter were in communication with the émigrés, and were stirring and preparing the peasantry universally to revolt. The assembly passed a decree, declaring all émigrés, who continued in hostile meeting on the frontier beyond the month of January, civilly dead, and their property seized, without prejudice, however, to their wives, children, or creditors. Another ordained measures of similar rigour against those priests who refused the oath, and continued to excite agitation. These laws were certainly but a just measure of retaliation.

The king, from a personal feeling that may well be conceived, made the first use of his veto in suspending them: and then was instantly seen the absurd balance of powers provided by the constitution. The rage of the revolutionists in general knew no bounds, on finding their arms tied in their efforts to combat the enemies of the state; unable to attack the monarch directly, they turned their resentment against the constitutionalists, whose system thus obstructed them with its veto. They directed their scrutiny and eloquence against the existing ministers, whom Louis had chosen from that party. Delessart, the secretary for foreign affairs, was accused of feebleness, of betraying the dignity and interests of the country in his correspondence with the courts of Europe. Such being the opinion of the majority, Delessart was arrested, and sent for trial before the high court sitting at Orleans. Thus the constitutionalists, having yielded their influence in the senate and the municipality, were soon driven from the ministry, the Girondins and Jacobins uniting to complete their ruin.

It was in the debates excited by this question, and by the menaced interference of foreign countries, that Isnard, deputy of Provence, poured forth that eloquent diatribe, which soon resounded throughout the courts of

Europe. "They would bring us back our noblesse!" cried he. "If all the nobles of the earth were to assail us, the French people, with their gold in one hand, their swords in the other, will combat that imperious race, and force it to endure the penalty of equality. Let us elevate ourselves in this conjuncture to a level with our high mission. Let us speak to ministers, to the king, and to Europe, with the dignity that becomes the representatives of France. Let ministers know our little satisfaction with their conduct, and that by the word responsibility we mean death. Tell Europe that we will respect the constitution of other governments; but that if a league of kings be made against us, we, in turn, will raise a war of people against kings."

The French excuse the violence and crimes of their revolution, by pleading that every fresh excess was provoked by the enemies of freedom. Thus, the oath of the tennis court, the insurrection ending in the capture of the Bastille, that of October which led the king forcibly from Versailles, were all indebted to the menacing approach of troops, and to the banquet of the *garde du corps*. The coalition entered into by the European sovereigns at Pillnitz, and their subsequent support of the émigrés at Coblenz, were destined to produce a still more fearful reaction.



A French Grenadier, Time of the Revolution

With Europe certainly France was not the aggressor. Disunited in councils, the interior swarming with secret enemies, and the army disorganised, she had every reason to avoid a war. It was deprecated by the furious Jacobins, who dreaded alike to see the enemy, or their own generals, victorious. They thought on Cromwell, and trembled to see La Fayette, their enemy, acquire influence similar to his at the head of armies. The Girondists, on the contrary, clamoured for open war. Though not military men, they had the instinct of the nation's force, and augured triumph where others feared defeat. Almost all, being men of studious habits and pursuits, were deeply imbued with those classic ideas, that the vile Jacobins afterwards caught up and parodied. They believed themselves in ancient Rome, and looked not only to overthrow the Tarquin of the day, but to spread far and wide the glory and dominion of their country. In this proud spirit of emulation, the Girondists already carried their views beyond the poor boon of liberty, which the Jacobins, construing it however with license, would have been contented with. The Girondists it was who first conceived that bold project of extended conquest, afterwards realised by Napoleon.

The constitutionalists, however, still clung to the ministry, and, as officers and generals, prevailed in the army. Luckner, Rochambeau, and La Fayette commanded. The last the Girondists forgave, and wished to preserve, hoping at that time mighty achievements from his military fame. They were compelled, indeed, to recruit for heroes, and choose them elsewhere than in their own body. Dumouriez promised, above all others, to answer their views. This was a bold adventurer, enterprising, ambitious, talented; but too selfish, wayward, and passionate to have fixed principles. He affected to belong to all parties; flattered the king and the Jacobins, as well as the Girondists. The latter, at the recommendation of Brissot, adopted him. Madame Roland, the priestess of the party, was the only one who saw through him with a woman's penetration, and described him as "a talented *roué*, a bold cavalier, prepared to mock and trifle with everything except his interests and his glory."

The Girondists themselves deserve more particular mention. Brissot was long considered to be their leader. He was, in fact, their journalist, and the chief point of connection between them, who were provincials, and the capital. Being thus apparently the manager of their intrigues, the Jacobins called the whole party Brissotites. Vergniaud was their chief orator: he was a vulgar Fox; the same mildness, the same impassive appearance and equanimity of temper, contrasted with bursts of fervid eloquence when excited. Condorcet, of noble birth, was the philosopher and theorist of their ranks. He was their Sieyès, according to Mignet's[b] expression, but with more elevation, more elegance, and more disinterestedness. Madame Roland, in fine, was to the Girondists what De Staël was to the constitutionalists—the priestess of their temple; for politics had displaced religion; and deliberation, prayer. There were beauty, talents, firmness, heroism, and, at the same time, tenderness of sentiment in Madame Roland; and yet there is a tint of vulgar prejudice, even of ferocity, seen throughout her autobiography, that chills all sympathy.

Roland, the husband of this lady, an honest, rigid personage, a philosophic puritan, born to be at most the chief clerk of a ministerial office, was fixed on by Louis as the minister of interior that he was to select from the Girondists. Dumouriez had the department of war, and made himself agreeable to the king and to his diminutive court; whilst Roland, unkempt, in round hat, and strings in his shoes, stalked into the royal presence. A ghost would have excited more welcome and less horror. "What! a man without buckles!" exclaimed the horrified master of the ceremonies. "Ah!" ejaculated Dumouriez, covering with gravity an inclination to laugh outright, "if it be come to that, all is lost."

WAR DECLARED AGAINST AUSTRIA (APRIL 20TH, 1792)

The task of the new ministers and their party was to remove the state of suspense in which affairs, both domestic and foreign, remained, to bring matters to a crisis with the leagued sovereigns and with their own. An open manifestation of opinion was demanded of the emperor of Austria. He required, in reply, that France should recur to the state of government and parties which existed when the royal sitting took place at the commencement of the constituent assembly. This was a peremptory summons directed to the torrent or the whirlwind.

The assembly replied, in April, 1792, by a declaration of war. One-half of the scheme of the Girondists was thus fulfilled: the other was to force the king to resign himself freely to the current of the Revolution, join with it, that is, with them; else their resolve was to force or to dethrone him. Their powers of reasoning were first employed to bend the monarch: Vergniaud, Gaudet, and Gensonné drew up and sent to him a letter of exhortation to this

effect. But Louis was by no means so meekly disposed as he had been when the assembly met. His queen was irritated by the revival of the popular feeling against her, produced by the demands of the emperor her nephew. The Girondist ministers made themselves odious to what still called itself a court, by their uncouthness and pretensions; and, above all, Dumouriez was false. Feeling himself in office, he broke with the Girondists, as he had done with the constitutionalists, and influenced the king to resist their counsels and insinuations. He sought to play the part of Mirabeau, without that great man's tact and powers. The effect of this conduct was unfortunate. It raised the spirits of the old royalist party, and induced Louis once more to listen to them.

The first action that took place on the frontiers, near Tournay, April 28th, 1792, was unfavourable to the revolutionary soldiers. They fled in a panic, and massacred their leader, Dillon, who expostulated and sought to rally them. This raised still higher the hopes of the small knot of young military that still thronged in the outer saloons of the Tuileries. The populace were proportionally awakened and excited; and thus were sown afresh the seeds of insurrection.

Dumouriez endeavoured to support himself in a medium between contending parties. He caused Marat to be accused for exciting to sedition, in his journal called *l'Ami du Peuple*. A royalist writer was at the same time summoned to answer; but the minister could not communicate even his own share of prudence to the king. Pique, rather than policy, now came to govern Louis. The assembly had voted him a constitutional guard, the greater part of it to be raised from the youth of the middle classes composing the national force of the provinces. It had been tampered with: its officers showed that spirit of hostility to the assembly which had gained the favour of the court. The assembly at length issued a decree, breaking this troop. They at the same time, indeed, ordered its place to be supplied by new levies; but the king, irritated at finding himself thus controlled, refused to have any guard whatever, and occupied his solitary palace, exposed at all times to the irruptions of the rabble.

From the moment that Dumouriez, and with him the monarch, broke with the Girondists, or rather with the majority of the assembly (for Girondists and Jacobins were still united in their public measures), the latter directed all their batteries against the throne, determined to overturn the few bulwarks that yet remained, since it dared to contradict their wishes. Their decrees and votes adroitly prepared the way for this audacious scheme. In the commencement of June, Servan, minister of war, a tool of the Girondists, proposed to the assembly, without consulting either his colleagues or the monarch, to establish a camp of federals from the different provinces, under the walls of the capital. The assembly welcomed the proposal with delight. The federals, or volunteers, being naturally the most furious revolutionists of the nation, would serve as auxiliaries to the Parisian mob to keep in awe the more moderate and constitutional partisans that remained still attached to the king, amongst the better class of citizens. The national guard, especially the unpaid battalions of the respectable quarters, were of this colour. The republicans dreaded their stubbornness and interference. Here was the blunder and the crime of the Girondists, both of which they dearly expiated. Although enlightened, educated, professional men, they called in large reinforcements of the rabble to crush the middle ranks, which were their own, although they differed from them in degree.

This formed another crisis in the reign of Louis; had he seized it, the supremacy of the rabble might at least have been prevented. Many thousand

national guards, of the more respectable citizens, petitioned against the federal camp. The middle class was aroused, perceived its danger, and its enemies; saw that the Girondists were betraying them, and that there was a necessity for defending the throne. It was the policy of Louis to have flung his whole influence into the scale of this party. Dumouriez's advice was rejected. The monarch defied the Girondists and popular body, without rallying to him the national guard or the citizens. It was then that Roland and his wife, with pedantic impertinence, drew up a letter of advice to their sovereign. It was uncalled for, and could not be useful; for Louis, refusing to hearken to the moderate revolutionists, was little likely to assent to the violent.[1] The royal family were maddened by the daily insults heaped upon them, especially on the unfortunate queen. Their enemies deprived them of all coolness, judgment, or prudence. The letter produced what the Girondists might and perhaps did expect, the dismissal of Roland, and an open rupture between them and the monarch. Dumouriez would still have remained, could he have induced Louis to adopt even now the course that he had recommended. The king could not be made to comprehend his interests; and Dumouriez resigned, in tears at the certainty of the catastrophe that must follow.

La Fayette, as sensible as Dumouriez to the danger of the throne, now came to its assistance; and at least recorded his principles, and vented his indignation, in a letter to the assembly, accusing the Jacobins of anarchic views, declaring that the clubs swayed the assembly and the nation, and that there was no safety for the country till they were put down. This was a thrust with a foil against an enemy in armour of proof. The assembly struck it aside with derision. La Fayette was now Cromwell in the public voice, and the little brilliancy of his exploits at the head of his army sank his reputation lower.

THE 20TH OF JUNE, 1792

The populace were terrified at the menaced invasion. Even their leaders expected no less at this time than soon to see the Prussians and Austrians masters of the capital. The rabble shared their fears, and reasoned, or were taught to reason thus: "Yet this is the moment that Louis Capet prevents, by his single word of dissent, the levy of the federal army that might save us; this is the time chosen to dismiss ministers of honesty and zeal!"

The demagogues sought the first pretext to collect the people. They pleaded that it was necessary to excite their zeal, and to arm them in order to be in readiness for the approach of the enemy. Pikes were accordingly forged and distributed. And thus the mob had their peculiar force in the enrolled pikemen of the faubourgs, as the citizens had theirs in the national guard. The 20th of June was near. It was the anniversary of the oath of the tennis court. It was resolved to celebrate this by the assembling of the pikemen in view of the Tuileries. The Girondists favoured the plan; they did not imagine that it would end in blood, but merely have the salutary effect of frightening Louis, and forcing him to abandon his veto. As Pétion, one of the most violent of their party, was mayor, and thus in command of the police and the national guard, there was no opposition to be dreaded.

The rabble assembled accordingly on the morning of the 20th. Santerre,

[1 "This moment was in fact the last chance for Louis to save his crown, by putting himself resolutely at the head of the Revolution. Far from that, he sent a secret agent, Mallet du Pan, to the allies. This was not known at the time, but everyone felt, no doubt, that the so-called 'Austrian Committee,' gathered about the queen, corresponded with the enemies." — DURUY.]

a brewer, was at their head. With the tree of liberty and the "Rights of Man" borne in triumph before them, a redoubtable body of some 40,000 pikemen, mustering the whole of the lower class of the capital, first proceeded to present an address to the assembly. The Girondists and Jacobins received their auxiliaries with welcome. The pikemen had the honour of defiling through the hall of sitting. They then marched to the Tuileries, in order to present another petition to the king, making known their approach by shouts of "Down with the veto!"—"*Vivent les Sansculottes!*"—and the chorus of "*Ça ira.*" On first arriving at the gate of the palace, they were denied entrance.*g*

CARLYLE ON THE PROCESSION OF THE BLACK BREECHES

What Processions have we not seen: *Corpus-Christi* and Legendre waiting in his Gig; Bones of Voltaire with bullock-chariots, and goadsmen in Roman Costume; Feasts of Châteaux-Vieux and Simonneau; Gouvion Funerals, Rousseau Sham-funeral, and the Baptism of Pétion-National-Pike! Nevertheless this Procession has a character of its own. Tricolour ribands streaming aloft from Pike-heads; ironshod batons; and emblems not a few; among which see specially these two, of the tragic and untragic sort: a Bull's Heart transfixed with iron, bearing this epigraph, "*Cœur d'Aristocrate*" (Aristocrat's heart), and, more striking still, properly the standard of the host, a pair of old Black Breeches (silk, they say), extended on cross-staff high overhead, with these memorable words: "*Tremblez tyrans, voilà les Sansculottes!*" (Tremble tyrants, here are the Sansindispensables.) Also, the Procession trails two cannons.

A French Citizen, Time of the Revolution

The shadows fall longer, eastward; it is four o'clock: will his Majesty not come out? Hardly he! In that case, Commandant Santerre, Cattle-butcher Legendre, Patriot Huguenin with the tocsin in his heart; they, and others of authority will enter in. Petition and request to wearied uncertain National Guard; louder and louder petition; backed by the rattle of our two cannons! The reluctant Grate opens: endless Sansculottic multitudes flood the stairs; knock at the wooden guardian of your privacy. Knocks, in such case, grow strokes, grow smashings: the wooden guardian flies in shivers. And now ensues a Scene over which the world has long wailed; and not unjustly; for a sorrier spectacle, of Incongruity fronting Incongruity, and as it were recognising themselves incongruous, and staring stupidly in each other's face, the world seldom saw.

King Louis, his door being beaten on, opens it; stands with free bosom; asking, "What do you want?" The Sansculottic flood recoils awestruck;

returns however, the rear pressing on the front, with cries of, "Veto! Patriot Ministers! Remove Veto!"—which things, Louis valiantly answers, this is not the time to do, nor this the way to ask him to do. Honour what virtue is in a man. Louis does not want courage; he has even the higher kind called moral-courage, though only the passive-half of that. His few National Grenadiers shuffle back with him, into the embrasure of a window: there he stands, with unimpeachable passivity, amid the shouldering and the braying; a spectacle to men. They hand him a red Cap of Liberty; he sets it quietly on his head, forgets it there. He complains of thirst; half-drunk Rascality offers him a bottle, he drinks of it. "Sire, do not fear," says one of his Grenadiers. "Fear?" answers Louis; "feel then," putting the man's hand on his heart. So stands Majesty in Red woollen Cap; black Sansculottism weltering round him, far and wide, aimless, with inarticulate dissonance, with cries of "Veto! Patriot Ministers!"

For the space of three hours or more! The National Assembly is adjourned; tricolour Municipals avail almost nothing: Mayor Pétion tarries absent; Authority is none. The Queen with her Children and Sister Elizabeth, in tears and terror not for themselves only, are sitting behind barricaded tables and Grenadiers, in an inner room. The Men in black have all wisely disappeared. Blind lake of Sansculottism welters stagnant through the King's Château, for the space of three hours.

Nevertheless all things do end. Vergniaud arrives with Legislative Deputation, the Evening Session having now opened. Mayor Pétion has arrived, is haranguing, "lifted on the shoulders of two Grenadiers"; finally Commandant Santerre defiles; passes out, with his Sansculottism, by the opposite side of the Château. Passing through the room where the Queen, with an air of dignity and sorrowful resignation, sat among the tables and Grenadiers, a woman offers her too a Red Cap; she holds it in her hand, even puts it on the little Prince Royal. "Madame," said Santerre, "this People loves you more than you think."—About eight o'clock the Royal Family fall into each other's arms amid "torrents of tears." Unhappy Family! Who would not weep for it, were there not a whole world to be wept for?

Thus has the Age of Chivalry gone, and that of Hunger come. Thus does all-needing Sansculottism look in the face of its *Roi*, Regulator, King or Able-man; and find that he has nothing to give it. Thus do the two Parties, brought face to face after long centuries, stare stupidly at one another. This, it is I; but, good Heaven, is that Thou?—and depart, not knowing what to make of it. And yet, Incongruities having recognised themselves to be incongruous, something must be made of it. The Fates know what.

This is the world-famous Twentieth of June, more worthy to be called the "Procession of the Black Breeches."*h*

LA FAYETTE'S FALL

Of the events that followed fast, Croker makes this surprising statement: "The 'Fifty Days,' from the 20th of June to the 10th of August, 1792, comprised the stormy transition of France from the monarchy to the republic, and have already had, and will probably continue to have, a greater influence on the destinies of mankind than any other fifty days in the history of the world."*o*

This 20th of June was a day of delusion; for as no definite plan or object had been settled for the undertaking, nothing was really attained, and it even

appeared at first as if the originators of the tumult would have effected precisely the opposite of that which they intended to accomplish. The national assembly felt ashamed of being misused, and that they and the king had been disgraced before the eyes of all Europe. Paris, and all educated Frenchmen in the whole kingdom, felt indignant at the manner in which freedom and the new constitution had been dishonoured by the very dregs of the people, who had been excited and led on by the profligates and criminals of the wine-shops.

The elder Lacretelle,[a] in his small-talk respecting the Revolution, states that one petition against the scenes of the 20th of June was signed by 8,000 and another by 20,000 citizens, and that the public displeasure was so great as to cause the suspension of Pétion and Manuel for a time from their offices, because they had not fulfilled their duty. The national assembly, which had been previously alarmed for their safety and power, now recovered resolution and drew the prosecution before themselves. On the 13th of July the two Girondists were acquitted and restored, and on the following day (the 14th) they triumphed and insulted the king at the *fête* of the confederation.

La Fayette planned to carry the king away from the city and conduct him to Normandy, where the great majority belonged to the party of the monarchical constitutionalists, which was by far the strongest; but he could not resolve to act with boldness and rapidity without first writing and speaking much on the subject. A letter from him which was read on the 18th had already excited a great dislike to his pretensions; his arbitrary departure from the army, his appearance in Paris on the 28th of June, and his speech to the assembly, before which he appeared uncalled, caused universal displeasure.

La Fayette assumed such a tone in the national assembly that, if he was not prepared to give effect to his language by force of arms, he must necessarily lose all his political distinction by his insulting conduct. He reproached them severely on account of the events of the 20th, and demanded the suppression of the Jacobins. His address excited a violent storm: proposals were made to arraign him because he had left the army without leave, and it was only with difficulty accomplished that the assembly should contemptuously proceed to the order of the day.

Having failed in his attempt in the national assembly, he wished to persuade the king and the queen to put their confidence in him, and to suffer him to convey them from Paris to Rouen. His conversation with the queen convinced him that she felt too great a repugnance towards him fully to confide in his plans, even for her own deliverance. In fact nothing could be effected in the Tuileries by his instrumentality.

On the 7th of July, Lamourette, the constitutional bishop of Lyons, addressed the deputies on the evils and misfortunes of their bitter party-spirit in such a pathetic and affecting strain that all suddenly vowed to forget their mutual animosities, embraced each other and were reconciled, in the midst of the loud rejoicings and applause of the people in the galleries. This transitory reconciliation is called "Lamourette's kiss of peace."

FRANCE RISES EN MASSE

The reconciliation of the 7th of July might perhaps have borne some fruit, had not the constitutional deputies in the national assembly, and even some of the Girondists, insisted on the punishment of the originators of the scenes of the 20th of June. Manuel and Pétion, who were at the head of

the municipal administration of Paris, were to be prosecuted, and it would therefore have been easy for them to deliver and destroy all the adherents of the monarchy by a new general insurrection. Since the 2nd of July, the national guard had been so organised by law that the guardsmen from among the lower classes, who were armed with pikes, played a leading part in all its operations, because all respectable persons were filled with disgust. By the law just referred to, the whole general staff of the national guard of Paris, and of all cities containing 50,000 inhabitants, were dismissed, and the grenadiers of the rifle companies disbanded, because such distinctions in names and dress were contrary to equality. As the insurrection prepared in July was to call forth an ideal republic, all the Girondists also, particularly Brissot, Vergniaud, Guadet, and Condorcet, from the middle of the month adopted the tone and language of Camille Desmoulins and Danton.

The declaration of war made on the part of Austria and Prussia was instrumental in promoting the success of the *coup de force* against the king, the monarchy, and everything in any wise connected with the old order of things. The Austrians, Prussians, and émigrés no sooner made a forward movement against France, and the Sardinians began to threaten the south, than advantage was taken of the pretext of the safety of the nation to effect the abolition of all the existing authorities and institutions. A levy of the people *en masse* was proclaimed in order to defend the frontiers, and a patriotic movement originated which must necessarily set all law at defiance. It was so much the easier to turn this general movement and national indignation against the king and the monarchy, as everyone knew that the court had kept up an uninterrupted correspondence with the enemies, and the queen was in the habit of anxiously calculating the number of days which it would take the allies to reach Paris.

On the entrance of the allied army into France, the duke of Brunswick, as commander-in-chief, was necessarily obliged to issue a manifesto, on the tenor of which the agents of Louis XVI and the princes were consulted. Heymann and Mallet du Pan entirely concurred in the opinion that it ought not to be threatening, and that the powers must not assume the right of entering the country as judges, but in the character of mediators between the king and the nation. This wish, which was expressed in the name of the king, for whose relief the whole expedition was designed, was warmly opposed by the count of Artois, who seems to have been born to bring calamity and ruin upon the elder branch of the Bourbons, and by the worthless Calonne as representatives of the émigrés, who were thirsting after a bloody revenge.

The duke of Brunswick, who bore the blame of this manifesto for his whole life, by which he was at once exposed to ridicule and hatred, was wholly dissatisfied both with its substance and its tone; but what could a Frenchman and complete courtier, such as he was, do?

This unlucky manifesto, which was full of ridiculous and cruel threats against all those who had at that time any influence and power in France, reached Paris at the very moment in which Danton's Cordeliers, Robespierre's Jacobins, and the enthusiastic republicans of the Gironde had come to a complete understanding on the necessity of abolishing monarchy and establishing a republic, in order to rescue the national honour, and on the lawfulness of any means by which these ends might be promoted. The Jacobins, who were under the leading of Robespierre, had not from the first approved of the reconciliation of the 7th of July, and the reconciled parties no sooner again disagreed, on account of the judicial investigation of the scenes enacted on the 20th of June, than they promoted anarchy.

Barbaroux and his over-sanguine friends called forth an insurrection in the southern departments of France; Servan's decree relating to the army of patriots was placarded on the walls of Paris in another form, in which it did not require the king's sanction, and immediately eight hundred Marseillese were ordered by Barbaroux to come to Paris. As early as the 9th of July, those ministers who had accepted office on Dumouriez's retirement, in order to please the king, were compelled to relinquish their places.

By the decree issued on the 11th, in which the declaration was made that "the country was in danger," the system of legislation changed the whole of France into a great camp. All the legislative and executive bodies were to hold uninterrupted sittings, that is, were declared permanent; the deputies of the people, the councils of the communes, and the sections in the cities therefore took the government upon themselves, and exercised immediate jurisdiction through their committees without an application to the ministry or any other intermediate authority, and their bodies received regular instructions as to their course of action from the leaders of the clubs. This artificial and forced condition was characterised by the name of the Crisis, and this crisis was to be announced throughout the whole of the kingdom by the firing of minute-guns. Measures were forthwith adopted throughout all the cities, towns, and villages of France, to enrol thousands of volunteers for the defence of the nation in the lists opened for that purpose.

MARAT
(From an old French print)

The *fête* of the 14th of July was celebrated this time by very different persons from those who had been present on the two previous years. Those who attended the solemn act of confederation in 1792 were from that time forward called Confederates, which expression came to signify the same as Terrorists. Manuel and Pétion, it is true, as well as some other deputies of the Gironde, continued to be associated with the wild and destructive tools of Danton and Marat till September; but the proper heads of the Girondist party, or all those republicans who were opposed to a state of lawlessness and anarchy, perceived as early as the 14th of July the object at which Robespierre, Marat, Danton, and Camille Desmoulins, who is not to be confounded with the three former, were aiming; the most moderate of the party therefore endeavoured to free themselves from the fanatics and scoundrels and to draw nearer to the king. The ablest men among the republicans, Brissot, Guadet, and Vergniaud, opened a correspondence with the king: their letters were afterwards found during the plundering of the Tuileries, and were used by their enemies against them; they were unable however to come to any understanding, because they only promised to save the king upon conditions to which the latter thought he could not possibly accede.

From this time forward the dethronement of the king was demanded on all sides by petitions from the communes, magistrates, and sections of Paris.

It soon, however, became obvious that it was as little possible in any legal way to proclaim the king's forfeiture of his right to the throne, as to cause a republic to be decreed by an assembly of deputies whose powers were derived from a monarchical constitution: it was therefore necessary to have recourse to other means. The means adopted was a recourse to the pretended sovereignty of the mob, called the people, which had been called into action on the 20th of June, without however having any definite plan or following any systematic course; this was now to be done.

The insurrection, which was resolved upon for August, was chiefly promoted from the middle of July by two advocates of great talents, who devoted all their powers to the task, and acted under the influence of an ill-regulated enthusiasm. They were undoubtedly men of pure patriotism and good intentions, although they had recourse to criminal means. These men were Camille Desmoulins and Barbaroux, the former of whom was an advocate in Paris and led the people by his speeches, and the latter, who was an advocate in Marseilles, put the whole south of France in motion. The masses of the people who were to be worked upon in the wine-shops and streets, and to be roused to action by money and the payment of their scores, were intrusted to such people as Chabot, Bazire, and Danton, who employed for their object the writings of Marat, Fréron, and the innumerable pamphleteers of the time.

"THE RISE OF THE COMMUNE"

According to the political creed of the democrats of the time, the sovereign people alone could determine and execute what those who put themselves forward as their organs eagerly desired; the national assembly therefore adopted measures to justify them by supposing that the sovereign people was always assembled. It published a decree, in which the forty-eight assemblies of the sections of Paris were declared to be legally permanent, and it was therefore only necessary to wait each evening till all the prosperous, quiet, and peaceable inhabitants had retired to their homes, or become weary of the strife, disputation, and blustering, and there existed in the midst of Paris these forty-eight smoking volcanos.[d]

As the crisis of insurrection approached, these sections sent commissaries — deputies in fact — to the chief municipal assembly at the Hôtel-de-Ville, which, composed of citizens of some substance, and more Girondist than Jacobin, was little zealous in the cause of anarchy. The commissaries, accordingly, took upon them to expel the old municipality, and to establish themselves in its place. Such was the formation of the celebrated *commune*, that seconded the insurrection, and, afterwards, resisting the assembly itself, gave the Jacobins the victory over all antagonists. The municipal council of Paris was in fact the helm of the Revolution; whatever party succeeded in grasping it guided the vessel of state.[e]

The desperate men who had been assembled in the southern provinces of France by the friends of Barbaroux, and called Marseillese, were to be employed for the execution of their design; these men obtained their name from having been collected in Marseilles, from the refuse of the seaports of Africa and the Levant. Barbaroux[g] has himself informed us of the zeal by which he was animated in urging the forwarding of the Marseillese to Paris, but is very careful to conceal the fact that they consisted of bandits, vagabonds, pardoned convicts, and other scum of the seaport towns. They met with a splendid reception on their entrance into Paris on the 30th of

July.[1] The most general hospitality was shown, and they were intentionally invited to entertainments with the national guards of the better class.[2] They were first quartered in a barrack, but as the time approached in which they were to be employed as instruments for the realisation of the plans of their leaders, they were removed into a section (*des Cordeliers*) where they would be near the central point of the storm, in which they were to be chief agents.

When at length the 9th of August arrived, and all was ready for storming the royal palace, the good-natured Santerre hesitated long before he could bring himself to consent to become the leader of a band of murderers; moreover he was not a man who had seen military service; but he was provided with one of those sergeants who in former times were the supports of the noble cadets, performed the real service, and became the generals of the Revolution. Westermann was obliged, it is said, to compel Santerre by force to obey Danton's hints. The same services were rendered by Fournier, a West Indian planter, who having lost his property during the first disturbances in the colonies afterwards played one of the most dreadful parts on every occasion in Paris under the nickname of "the American." On the 9th and 10th of August he marched at the head of the Marseillese.

THE GATHERING OF THE "COMMUNE"

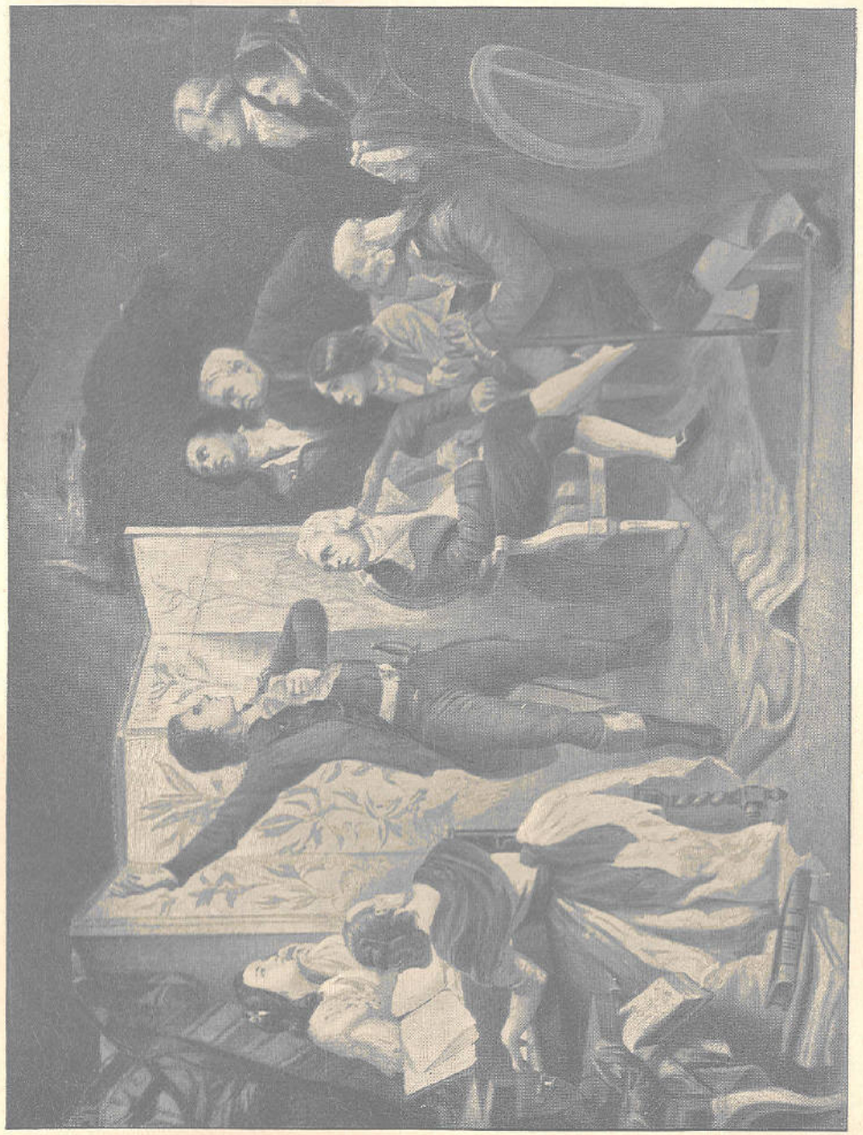
On the evening of the 9th of August, 1792, the same course was pursued as had become usual; the rabble, denominated "the Sovereign People," gathered together in the sectional assemblies to pass their resolutions, waited till the peaceful citizens were either scattered about on the various military posts or had retired to rest, before they commenced their deliberations in the forty-eight sections of Paris, on the propriety of suspending the functions of all the existing authorities. A decree was issued, by virtue of which the sovereign people resumed all the powers which it had at any time conferred, and undertook the immediate rights of legislation and government, or intrusted their execution to a committee of the sections, which was immediately chosen (only during the insurrection) and met in the hall of the archbishop's palace (*évêché*), where also the constituent assembly on their arrival in Paris had long held their meetings.

At midnight the signal was given by the firing of artillery; the alarm-bells were rung during the whole of the night, and those who had been provisionally chosen to fill the places of the old magistrates under the new order of things were called into action. The immense mass of men of violence and blood began their march. Westermann, in connection with Santerre, led the people of the faubourg St. Antoine; Alexander, Santerre's brother-in-law, headed those of St. Marceau; Barbaroux the Marseillese; and Panis the section of the arsenal. If, however, the departmental or municipal magistrates had done their duty the whole uproar would have been easily nipped in the bud.[a]

The royal inmates of the Tuileries had ample warning of their peril. The few royalists who still remained in Paris hurried to defend their sove-

[1 During their march north the Marseillese, in fraternising with the patriots, sang the hymn of Rouget de Lisle, which was from that time called *La Marseillaise*.]

[2 Pétion, as mayor, caused arms, powder, and ball to be distributed amongst these dangerous people. In this way quarrels arose, which led to absolute contests between the entertainers and the guests, the national guards of the sections *des filles de St. Thomas* and *des petits pères* and the Marseillese. Many sons of respectable citizens were dangerously wounded in the fray, and followed from the Champs Elysées into the interior of the Tuileries.]



ROUGET DE LISLE SINGING THE MARSEILLAISE
(From the painting by Pils in the Louvre)

[1792 A.D.]

reign; but, for the most part old helpless courtiers, they merely excited the jealousy of the national guard, without offering material aid. Where then were the gay troops of émigrés, the gallant youth of the French noblesse? This was the hour and the field where they might have perished with honour, or more probably triumphed. In their stead, the defenders of the palace consisted of a Swiss regiment, mustering eight hundred men, and two of the most staunch battalions of the national guard. They were commanded by Mandat, an old soldier, who happened to be the colonel in authority for the day.

At first the national guard were unwilling to act without orders from the municipality; but Pétion, the Girondist mayor, who dared neither to approve nor disapprove the insurrection, had wandered to the palace, in order to have after-proofs that he had not participated in it, so strong were the fears that the people might fail in their enterprise. Pétion, seized at the Tuileries, was compelled to sign an order to repel force by force. Authorised by this, Mandat made dispositions to resist the insurgents; he proposed to anticipate their attack, and fall upon the columns of rabble as they advanced. A summons from the municipality now reached Mandat; he thought it necessary to obey, hurried to the Hôtel-de-Ville, and was astonished to find it altogether changed, and composed of new members.

After interrogating Mandat, Huguenin, the president of the commune, ordered, with a side gesture of the hand, that he should be removed. He was removed effectually, by a pistol-shot; and thus the troops at the château were left without a commander. Louis himself might have supplied his place; the queen at one moment prompted him to this energy. Seizing a pistol from the belt of one of his attendants, Marie Antoinette presented it to Louis, "Now is the moment to show yourself." Louis was endowed with passive, not with active courage. He obeyed mechanically the spirited suggestion, showed himself at the balcony, descended and reviewed the different troops, but all the time as silent and unanimated as at an ordinary scene. A short speech, the wielding of his sword, his mounting on horseback, any of these acts, in short, that strike and carry away the feelings of a mass, would here have told, and rallied all hearts round the monarch, who was still saluted with cries of *Vive le roi!* The fuel was there in a thousand hearts, that could have been kindled into loyalty, had the cold nature of Louis been capable of striking out a spark: but the review was a complete failure. The execrations of the mob gained upon the national guard more than the sight of their pale, spiritless, and weeping monarch. The cannoniers turned their guns against the château, in token of their opinions; the gendarmerie dispersed; and the Swiss alone remained to defend the palace.

Seeing this, Roederer, *procureur* or attorney of the commune, advised Louis to abandon the château, and retire with his family to the national assembly. The queen violently opposed this step. "Madame," said he, "you will have to answer for the lives of the king and of all his family, as well as of those collected here to defend you." This apostrophe decided Louis. After suffering unnumbered insults, Louis, followed by his queen and children, the dauphin in the arms of a pioneer, entered the assembly betwixt eight and nine o'clock.

In the meantime the masses of insurgents had penetrated into the courts in front of the château. The Swiss, and the few national guards that remained, made signs of amity from the windows, flinging down cartouches, and putting their caps upon their bayonets. The pikemen accordingly advanced to the great entrance under the vestibule, and demanded posses-

sion of the château, at the same time preparing to force a kind of barricade. Three or four Swiss sentries were stationed in low open windows. Some of the rabble amused themselves by pulling these soldiers down with the crooks of their pikes, and slaying them. Their comrades, seeing this, fired down upon the assassins, and the combat became general.[1] The Swiss, enraged, formed in a body, rushed down the grand staircase, sweeping the rabble before them. Issuing into the first court, they charged the Marseillese, who turned and fled, being imitated by the hordes of the faubourgs. In an instant every court and avenue was cleared; and had there been a single troop of cavalry to continue the rout of the fugitives, had Mandat, or any officer been there to follow up the advantage, the "cause of the people" was forever lost and disgraced.

But the king himself was destined to strike the fatal blow to his own cause. Hearing the cannon and the tumult, he sent M. d'Hervilly with an order for the Swiss to retire and abandon the château. D'Hervilly found the soldiers victorious, bringing in the cannon of the people, planting one piece in battery, spiking others. He made known the unseasonable command, most absurdly, to only one battalion of the Swiss. It thought proper to obey, and repair to the assembly, where it was instantly disarmed; and thus the remaining two or three hundred were left exposed to all the fury of the mob, rendered vindictive by their own cowardice and defeat.

In the lapse of an hour the Marseillese, unpursued, had received courage; mustered once more their hordes; and began to flock back to the château. They found its approaches unguarded. They rushed in. The Swiss, surrounded on all sides, were overpowered and massacred. The victorious rabble once more filled the halls and salons of the palace, murdering most of those who fell in their way, yet sparing some from caprice more than mercy. Eighteen Swiss took refuge in the chapel, and offered to surrender, if their lives were spared. The promise was speedily given; and the Swiss were not the less inhumanly butchered. The first attack took place about nine o'clock; by eleven the mob were masters of the Tuileries.[q]

CARLYLE ON THE MASSACRE AND ITS RESULTS

One party flies out by the Rue de l'Échelle; is destroyed utterly, "*en entier.*" A second, by the other side, throws itself into the Garden; "hurrying across a keen fusillade"; rushes suppliant into the National Assembly; finds pity and refuge in the back benches there. The third, and largest, darts out in column, three hundred strong, towards the Champs Élysées, to escape in holes, to die fighting from street to street. The very Firemen, who pump and labour on that smoking Carrousel, are shot at: why should the Carrousel not burn? Some Swiss take refuge in private houses; find that mercy too does still dwell in the heart of man. The brave Marseillese are merciful, late so wroth; and labour to save. Clemence, the Wine-merchant, stumbles forward to the Bar of the Assembly, a rescued Swiss in his hand; tells passionately how he rescued him with pain and peril, how he will henceforth support him, being childless himself; and falls a-swoon round the poor Swiss's neck: amid plaudits. But the most are butchered, and even mangled. Fifty (some say Fourscore) were marched as prisoners, by National Guards, to the Hôtel-de-Ville: the ferocious people bursts

[1 Carlyle's notes: "Patriot onlookers have their misgivings; one strangest Patriot onlooker thinks that the Swiss, had they a commander, would beat. He is a man not unqualified to judge; the name of him Napoleon Bonaparte."]

through on them, in the Place-de-Grève; massacres them to the last man. "*O Peuple*, envy of the universe!" *Peuple*, in mad Gaelic effervescence!

Surely few things in the history of carnage are painfuller. What ineffaceable red streak, flickering so sad in the memory, is that, of this poor column of red Swiss "breaking itself in the confusion of opinions"; dispersing, into blackness and death! Honour to you, brave men; honourable pity, through long times! Not martyrs were ye; and yet almost more. He was no King of yours, this Louis; and he forsook you like a King of shreds and patches: ye were but sold to him for some poor sixpence a-day; yet would ye work for your wages, keep your plighted word. The work now was to die; and ye did it.

Thus is the Tenth of August won and lost. Patriotism reckons its slain by the thousand on thousand, so deadly was the Swiss fire from these windows; but will finally reduce them to some Twelve-hundred. No child's-play was it; — nor is it! Till two in the afternoon the massacring, the breaking and the burning has not ended; nor the loose Bedlam shut itself again.

How deluges of frantic Sansculottism roared through all passages of this Tuileries, ruthless in vengeance; how the Valets were butchered, hewn down; and Dame Campan[e] saw the Marseillese sabre flash over her head, but the Blackbrowed said, "*Va-t-en*" (Get thee gone); and flung her from him unstruck; how in the cellars wine-bottles were broken, wine-butts were staved-in and drunk; and, upwards to the very garrets, all windows tumbled out their precious royal furnitures: and, with gold mirrors, velvet curtains, down of ript feather-beds, and dead bodies of men, the Tuileries was like no Garden of the Earth: — all this let him who has a taste for it see amply in Mercier,[q] in acrid Montgaillard,[r] or Beaulieu of the *Deux Amis*.[s] A hundred and eighty bodies of Swiss lie piled there; naked, unremoved till the second day. Patriotism has torn their red coats into snips; and marches with them at the Pike's point.

But the blackbrowed Marseillese have struck down the tyrant of the Château. He is struck down; low, and hardly again to rise. What a moment for an august Legislative was that when the Hereditary Representative entered, under such circumstances; and the Grenadier, carrying the little Prince Royal out of the press, set him down on the Assembly-table! A moment — which one had to smooth-off with oratory; waiting what the next would bring! Louis said few words: "He was come hither to prevent a great crime; he believed himself safer nowhere than here." President Vergniaud answered briefly, in vague oratory as we say, about "defence of Constituted Authorities," about dying at our post. And so King Louis sat him down; first here, then there; for a difficulty arose, the Constitution not permitting us to debate while the King is present: finally he settles himself with his family in the "*Loge* of the *Logographe*," in the Reporter's-Box of a Journalist; which is beyond the enchanted Constitutional Circuit, separated from it by a rail. To such Lodge of the *Logographe*, measuring some ten feet square, with a small closet at the entrance of it behind, is the King of broad France now limited: here can he and his sit pent, under the eyes of the world, or retire into their closet at intervals; for the space of sixteen hours. Such quite peculiar moment has the Legislative lived to see.

But also what a moment was that other, few minutes later, when the three Marseillese cannon went off, and the Swiss rolling-fire and universal thunder, like the crack of Doom, began to rattle! Honourable Members start to their feet; stray bullets singing epicedium even here, shivering in with window-

glass and jingle. "No, this is our post; let us die here!" They sit therefore, like stone Legislators. But may not the Loge of the *Logographe* be forced from behind? Tear down the railing that divides it from the enchanted Constitutional Circuit! Ushers tear and tug; his Majesty himself aiding from within: the railing gives way; Majesty and Legislative are united in place, unknown destiny hovering over both.

Rattle, and again rattle, went the thunder; one breathless wide-eyed messenger rushing in after another: King's order to the Swiss went out. It was a fearful thunder; but, as we know, it ended. Breathless messengers, fugitive Swiss, denunciatory Patriots, trepidation; finally tripudiation!—King Louis listens to all; retires about midnight "to three little rooms on the upper floor"; till the Luxembourg be prepared for him, and "the safeguard of the Nation." Safer if Brunswick were once here! Or, alas, not so safe? Ye hapless discrowned heads! Crowds came, next morning, to catch a glimpse of them, in their three upper rooms. Montgaillard[r] says the august Captives wore an air of cheerfulness, even of gaiety; that the Queen and Princess Lamballe, who had joined her overnight, looked out of the opened window, "shook powder from their hair on the people below, and laughed." He is an acrid distorted man.

For the rest, one may guess that the Legislative, above all that the New Municipality continues busy. Messengers, Municipal or Legislative, and swift despatches rush off to all corners of France; full of triumph, blended with indignant wail, for Twelve-hundred have fallen. France sends up its blended shout responsive; the Tenth of August shall be as the Fourteenth of July, only bloodier and greater. The Court has conspired? Poor Court: the Court has been vanquished; and will have both the scath to bear and the scorn. How the statues of Kings do now all fall! Bronze Henri IV himself, though he wore a cockade once, jingles down from the Pont Neuf, where *Patrie* floats in Danger. Much more does Louis Fourteenth, from the Place Vendôme, jingle down; and even breaks in falling. The curious can remark, written on his horse's shoe: "12 *Août*, 1692"; a Century and a Day.

The tenth of August was Friday. The week is not done, when our old Patriot Ministry is recalled, what of it can be got: strict Roland, Genevese Clavière; add heavy Monge the Mathematician, once a stone-hewer; and, for Minister of Justice,—Danton, "led hither," as himself says, in one of his gigantic figures, "through the breach of Patriot cannon!" These, under Legislative Committees, must rule the wreck as they can: confusedly enough; with an old Legislative water-logged, with a new Municipality so brisk. But National Convention will get itself together; and then! Without delay, however, let a new Jury-Court and Criminal Tribunal be set up in Paris, to try the crimes and conspiracies of the Tenth. High Court of Orleans is distant, slow: the blood of the Twelve-hundred Patriots, whatever become of other blood, shall be inquired after. Tremble, ye Criminals and Conspirators; the Minister of Justice is Danton! Robespierre too, after the victory, sits in the New Municipality; insurrectionary "improvised Municipality," which calls itself Council General of the Commune.

For three days now, Louis and his Family have heard the Legislative Debates in the Lodge of the *Logographe;* and retired nightly to their small upper rooms. The Luxembourg and safeguard of the Nation could not be got ready: nay, it seems the Luxembourg has too many cellars and issues; no Municipality can undertake to watch it. The compact Prison of the Temple, not so elegant indeed, were much safer. To the Temple, therefore!

On Monday, 13th day of August, 1792, in Mayor Pétion's carriage, Louis and his sad suspended Household fare thither; all Paris out to look at them. As they pass through the Place Vendôme, Louis Fourteenth's Statue lies broken on the ground. Pétion is afraid the Queen's looks may be thought scornful, and produce provocation; she casts down her eyes, and does not look at all. The "press is prodigious," but quiet: here and there, it shouts *Vive la Nation;* but for most part gazes in silence. French Royalty vanishes within the gates of the Temple: these old peaked Towers, like peaked Extinguisher or *Bonsoir*, do cover it up;—from which same Towers, poor Jacques de Molay and his Templars were burnt out, by French Royalty, five centuries since. Such are the turns of Fate below. Foreign Ambassadors, English Lord Gower have all demanded passports; are driving indignantly towards their respective homes.

So, then, the Constitution is over? Forever and a day! Gone is that wonder of the Universe; First biennial Parliament, water-logged, waits only till the Convention come; and will then sink to endless depths. One can guess the silent rage of Old-Constituents, Constitution-builders, extinct Feuillants, men who thought the Constitution would march! La Fayette rises to the altitude of the situation; at the head of his Army. Legislative Commissioners are posting towards him and it, on the Northern Frontier, to congratulate and perorate: he orders the Municipality of Sedan to arrest these Commissioners, and keep them strictly in ward as Rebels, till he say further. The Sedan Municipals obey.

The Sedan Municipals obey: but the Soldiers of the La Fayette Army? The Soldiers of the La Fayette Army have, as all Soldiers have, a kind of dim feeling that they themselves are Sansculottes in buff belts; that the victory of the Tenth of August is also a victory for them. They will not rise and follow La Fayette to Paris; they will rise and send him thither! On the 18th, which is but next Saturday, La Fayette, with some two or three indignant Staff-officers, one of whom is Old-Constituent Alexandre de Lameth, having first put his Lines in what order he could,—rides swiftly over the Marches, towards Holland. Rides, alas, swiftly into the claws of Austrians! He, long wavering, trembling on the verge of the Horizon, has set, in Olmütz Dungeons. Adieu, thou Hero of two Worlds; thinnest, but compact honour-worthy man! Through long rough night of captivity, through other tumults, triumphs and changes, thou wilt swing well, "fast-anchored to the Washington Formula"; and be the Hero and Perfect-character, were it only of one idea.[h]

THE FALL OF THE MONARCHY

The members of the new commune, having literally conquered power, intended to keep it, and to give the law to the assembly. They were the Revolution. They established themselves permanently at the Hôtel-de-Ville, received numerous deputations and petitions and without examination or discussion passed resolution after resolution, to the number of two hundred per day, eating, drinking, and sleeping in the hall. Their first cares were to take the charge of the police into their own hands, to close the barriers and inspect passports, to release those in custody, and to hand over to the patriots the presses of the royalist journals. They removed the busts of Bailly and La Fayette from the hall of the municipality. They sent commissioners direct to the armies. They suspended the directory of the department and set Pétion at liberty.

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The leader and organ of the commune was Robespierre. Although he had gone into hiding on the 10th, according to his custom on days of danger, he presented himself at the Hôtel-de-Ville on the 11th, and, as within and about the hall and on the tribunes he nowhere found any but Jacobins and sectionaries affiliated to the Jacobins, he was received as an oracle; he was chosen to be the principal orator of the deputations. He then assumed a tone of brutal frankness. He avowed in so many words that the 10th of August had been a premeditated plot; that the sections "rousing and guiding the patriotism of the people had organised the whole and selected their moment." "The plot," he added, "was not shrouded in darkness; it was deliberated in open day, in presence of the nation. Notice of the plan was given by the placards, and the people, acting in its sovereign capacity, has not deigned to conceal its design from its enemies." Energy was now demanded. Robespierre complained that the assembly, which was guilty of having absolved La Fayette, had decreed the suspension, not the deposition of the king; that it had spoken of the distrust he inspired and not of his crimes; and that it had actually chosen the sitting of the 10th to appoint a governor for the royal child. Little by little he worked up to the words: "The kings or the French must succumb. Mercy is barbarous. All your enemies must fall under the sword of the laws."

Royalty was vanquished. The legislative was not vanquished, but it was made of no effect. The Revolution had passed over its head.

CHAPTER IX

THE COMMUNE AND THE KING'S EXECUTION

[1792–1793 A.D.]

THE Girondists now wore cheerful faces. They affected delight at what had taken place; they claimed their share in the triumph and the spoils; and the Jacobins for the moment thought fit to respect these allies. The old ministers of the Gironde, Roland, Servan, Clavière, were restored to their respective offices. Pétion was allowed to keep the place of mayor. Such were the terms tacitly offered by the Jacobins, as the price of having their new municipality recognised by the assembly. Nevertheless the commune spoke bold and independent language. They sent a deputation, which thus addressed the assembly:

"The people, which sends us to you, declares you still worthy of its confidence; but at the same time can acknowledge no power authorised to pass judgment on the late extraordinary measures, prompted by necessity, except the people itself, your sovereign and ours, convoked in its primary assemblies." In reply, the assembly had the weakness, inevitable indeed, to acknowledge the new municipality and applaud its acts. With the Girondist ministers were united Lebrun, who was intrusted with foreign affairs, and the redoubtable Danton, who was called, it must have been ironically, the minister of justice.

Themselves entrenched in the commune, and supported by Danton in the government, the Jacobins now pushed their violent measures with audacity. Marat was the soul of this diabolical faction. His was the system and conception that it was necessary to the success of the Revolution to sacrifice unrelentingly the lives of the aristocrats. "Behold the monarch," argued he, "how absurd to have compromised with him, or expected sincerity! From the first moment he ought to have been dethroned or rendered harm-

less. The aristocrats are the same. They can never forgive. In them the Revolution will forever find enemies. But where is the prison ample enough to contain the numbers of the upper classes, were the jailers faithful enough to guard them? The grave is the only prison, the executioner the only certain keeper. Slay, slay! such is the key of true policy. Your armies are of no avail. Give me two hundred Neapolitans, armed with poniards: with them I will revolutionise France!"

It is a great stain upon the moral courage of the French that in their representative assemblies the audacious minority always overpowered the majority. The constitutionalists of the first assembly were crushed by their less numerous adversaries, and now the Girondists were at the mercy of the Jacobins. The municipality usurped all legislative power. Vengeance was their object, terror their support. In order to wreak the one and inspire the other, they proposed the composition of a revolutionary committee, by which alone passports were to be granted, and which was charged to arrest and pursue the suspected. Domiciliary visits enabled their emissaries to penetrate into all the houses of the capital. Moreover, the establishment of a revolutionary tribunal was required, as necessary to the safety of the state. This, to be composed of one member chosen from each section, was to issue summary and irrevocable judgments.

To this atrocious demand the assembly, despite its timidity, demurred; and the commune immediately despatched one of its body to pronounce the following menace: "As citizen, and as magistrate of the people, I come to acquaint the assembly that this evening at midnight the tocsin will sound, and the drums beat to arms. The people are weary of being balked of vengeance. Beware that they do not do themselves justice. I demand that instantly you vote a criminal tribunal, composed of one member from each section." This command was obeyed, and the decree passed.

While the Jacobins were thus directing their efforts to private and domestic vengeance, the Girondists were taking counsel as to the defence of the kingdom. Longwy was taken. In a fortnight the enemies might be in Paris. It was then that the latter party conceived the plan of abandoning the capital, and defending the country behind the Loire. The domineering conduct of the Jacobins and of the municipality, no doubt, rendered this project less displeasing to them. Yet it came ill from men who had been the first to sound the cry for war, even when the anarchists deprecated its chances. Now, however, the parties had changed sides. The Girondists adopted the subdued tone of despair; the Jacobins the uncompromising language of audacity. Danton, above all, inspired those around him with courage, and prepared, rather than surrender the capital, to bury himself beneath its ruins. To this was joined an inveterate resolve that, if the Revolution was destined to succumb, its internal enemies, the aristocrats and royalists, should not survive to enjoy their triumph. Such was the fierce motive of the massacres of September.

Throughout the month of August the revolutionary tribunal and the sections had crowded the prisons with the suspected. There was absolutely no room for more. And it was upon learning this that an agent of the Jacobins was directed to examine the quarries beneath the faubourg St. Germain. They were found to offer a capacious receptacle for the dead. Maillard, the man who had headed the female deputation of the expedition to Versailles, was now chosen, and supplied with funds to collect a band of sturdy assassins like himself, together with all fit instruments of death, such as swords, knives, and mallets.[b]

THE POLICY OF EXTERMINATION

The advance of the allies against Paris, and the ridiculous threats of the émigrés, which were strengthened by the signature and authority of the duke of Brunswick, gave great weight to the principle advocated by Danton and Marat, who maintained that there was no other means of rescuing the cause of freedom and the national honour than by a war of extermination carried on by the poor against the rich, and the uneducated against the educated classes.

From the 10th of August the doctrine was universally preached that everything old must be thoroughly extirpated, and the religion and morality of former times put in abeyance till a new order of things was founded; and both Robespierre and Danton acted on this principle to its fullest extent. Horrible as it may seem, it is yet perfectly true that Danton, as minister of justice, employed the administration of the sacred duty with which he was intrusted for the protection of his fellow-citizens, for their murder, and the funds of the state for the payment and reward of the murderers.

The national assembly made preparations for another St. Bartholomew's day in the beginning of September, by passing a decree, on the 15th of August, that the fathers, wives, mothers, or children of émigrés should not be suffered to remove out of the bounds of their respective communes. Previous to this, a decree had been passed with a view to divide the great estates, and to raise a multitude of families from a condition of feudal bondage to the rank and comfort of small proprietors; it had been resolved that the large estates of the émigrés should be divided and sold, and thus brought by portions into the hands of the new possessors.

After the 12th, all those who were called aristocratic journalists in Paris were arrested, and their printing-presses transferred to the patriots. Audouin, accompanied by a band of three hundred and fifty patriots, traversed the whole neighbourhood of Paris, in order to hunt out and arrest aristocrats. Domiciliary visits of all kinds were organised on a great scale, and Fouquier Tinville, together with some other similar persons, is said to have ordered the violation of private correspondence. Similar laws and measures were all resolved on by the council of the commune, and were only brought to light in the necessary form through the instrumentality of the national assembly; this council therefore called itself the General Revolutionary Council.

The council empowered Chaumette, one of the most fanatical of the Jacobins, and who was afterwards appointed Pétion's successor in the mayoralty, to cause all suspected persons to be judicially interrogated and arrested. The tribunal of the 10th of August was a prelude to those of the Revolution, and the mere mention of some decrees which were issued by the legislative assembly at the end of August will show the manner in which, and the reason why the legislative assembly was used in order to seize upon individuals, who were afterwards murdered without trial or sentence in the September massacres.

First, by the resolution of the 26th of August, the clergy were devoted to death, and on the 28th and 29th care was afterwards taken that no one who was disaffected to the reigning system should escape the eyes of the demagogues. It was decreed that domiciliary visits should be made throughout the whole kingdom, in order to drag to light the persons suspected by the clubs; next, nightly searches were ordered to be made through all the houses of Paris, and everyone was threatened with death who should offer the

least obstruction to the agents of the provisional government in tracing out and discovering their enemies. The commune completed this general law by a municipal order. It resolved that every house should be lighted in the evening, and no one be allowed to drive in the streets after ten o'clock.

The most dreadful of all these regulations, however, and one whose scope and object was not made obvious till the September days, was that by virtue of which all needy but able-bodied men were put in requisition, because the commune might require their services (for the September massacre), and to whom therefore a daily allowance in money was given as a retaining fee. As the day appointed for the massacre approached, a feeling of universal dread was diffused by the preparations made for the event. The barriers on all the approaches to the city were closed; patrols were constantly on foot around the whole circuit of Paris, and all suspected persons who had an appearance of seeking safety by flight were detained and arrested.

What is most horrible is that Danton, as minister of justice, had devised and arranged the whole affair, with that cold-blooded and diplomatic political wisdom which he had learned from Talleyrand and Mirabeau. As it was quite impossible even for the tribunal of the 10th of August to condemn whole masses of human beings, he adopted the very original idea of collecting together a number of people from the wine-houses, who in this night of slaughter and death were to assume the office of judges, and in the midst of intoxication and clamour to condemn or apparently acquit those devoted to destruction.[c]

THE SEPTEMBER MASSACRES

The 2nd of September was a Sunday. A rumour was prematurely spread that Verdun had surrendered (it surrendered later that day). The excitement was intense; the streets were crowded, people sought places of safety, and cries of "death to traitors!" were heard on all sides. The assembly, seized with the universal frenzy, decreed that all who should refuse to serve, either in person or by contributing arms, should be punished with death. "This is not the time for talking," says Vergniaud, "we must dig the enemy's grave, else every step he advances he digs ours." "Everything upheaves, everything totters," shouts Danton, "let one part of the people go to the frontiers, another dig trenches, and the third defend the heart of the town with pikes. The tocsin which rings is no alarm signal, it sounds the charge upon the enemies of the nation. To defeat them, gentlemen, it needs boldness, still more boldness, always boldness, and France is saved."

In answer to these startling phrases the commune had the following placard posted everywhere: "To arms, citizens, to arms! the enemy is at our gates. The council of the commune has decreed that the gates be shut, that all citizens betake themselves to the Champ-de-Mars to form an army that shall hold itself in readiness to march upon the enemy; all suspected persons will be arrested," etc. At the same time alarm guns were fired, the muster was beaten and the tocsin rung; the whole town was afoot — sections, commune, and assembly.

The assembly now sent twelve deputies to work at the Montmartre camp; the commune distributed its members throughout the sections to stir up the popular fury; the sections were full of excitement, and three amongst them doomed all prisoners to death in a body. Then a rumour was whispered abroad that the royalists were advancing on the prisons and going to deliver the town up to the Prussians — an absurd fiction, blindly swallowed by the populace.

"To the prisons!" — this cry resounded with unanimous and fearful spontaneity in the streets, public places, and wherever there were gatherings of the people; and even in the national assembly itself. "Let not a single enemy remain behind, living, to rejoice in our defeats and to strike at our women and children."

At this moment 24 priests were led by federals from the Hôtel-de-Ville to the Abbaye, amidst the hootings of the furious mob; four were killed on the way, and all the others — with the exception of Abbé Sicard, the founder of the deaf and dumb institute — had their throats cut in the courtyard by an armed party under the command of Maillard. The assassins then directed their ruthless steps to the Carmelites and to St. Firmin, where 244 priests were shot or cut down with swords, in the garden and in the church; only 49 succeeded in escaping. Then a return was made to the Abbaye, where 38 Swiss and 26 of the king's guard were massacred. A species of tribunal now was formed under Maillard, the prison register consulted, and after a summary interrogation, the prisoners were either killed or liberated. Seventy-seven prisoners were led out, 45 were restored to liberty "by the judgment of the people" (that is the expression of the prison register, preserved to this day); 32 were condemned to death by judgment of the people, and executed on the spot. In addition 27 priests were slaughtered; they were asked simply to swear to an oath, which they refused to do. The condemned were hustled out of the court into the yard, where they were hacked to pieces amidst the infuriated cries of a multitude of spectators, with swords and pikes. The acquitted were embraced by the blood-stained executioners to the accompaniment of cries of "Long live the nation!" and then conducted to their homes. A member of the commune, Billaud-Varennes, walked on the corpses, and shouted to the murderers: "You are saving the country, my brave citizens; go on with your work!" and he had wine distributed amongst them and promised each one 25 livres for his "work."

The slaughter continued during the following three days at the Châtelet, La Force, the Bernardines, and at Bicêtre. At La Force, out of 375 prisoners, 167 were condemned. Hébert, member of the commune, and editor of that most infamous journal, *Le Père Duchesne*, presided over the horrible tribunal, and it was there that Princess Lamballe, the unlucky friend of Marie Antoinette, perished; her body was torn to shreds, and her head, paraded through Paris, was carried as far as the Temple. Pétion rushed to the prison and strove vainly to stop the slaughter. "The men who judged, and the men who executed," he said, "were as self-confident as if the law had appointed them to carry out their functions; they bragged to me of their justice, their care in discriminating between the innocent and guilty, of the services they had rendered; they demanded payment for their time."

The number of the victims was, according to a royalist historian, 1,092. It was not only political prisoners who perished — ordinary criminals were included in the massacre; for instance, at the Châtelet, 189 perished, while 44 were liberated. Bicêtre was visited with some pieces of artillery, it being reported that there were arms there. The purification of that house of detention was carried out with the same horrible details as that of the cells in Paris. Prisoners for debt were set at liberty, and citizens whom misfortune had relegated there ran no risk, but all others fell under the swords, pikes, and clubs of the Herculean mob cleaning out the stables of King Augeas.

During these executions, Paris was stupefied; not one single hand in a town of 500,000 inhabitants was raised against the five or six hundred assassins. The national guard, already disorganised by Santerre, mystified with

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contradictory orders, was in part occupied at the Champ-de-Mars, and in part shared in the massacres. The assembly, terrified, sent a deputation to the Abbaye, which was repulsed with threats, and afterwards they maintained a cowardly inactivity. Roland begged of Pétion to interpose his authority, but Pétion was disobeyed everywhere; he ordered Santerre to summon the national guard, Santerre refused; he held the commune responsible for the massacres; the "watch committee" launched a warrant of arrest at him, which, but for the opposition of Danton, would have been put into effect. Danton, who as a man loathed that which he had advised as revolutionary, "hid his sympathy in his roar, and right and left screened as many victims as he was able."

MARIE THÉRÈSE LOUISE DE SAVOIE-CARIGNAN, PRINCESS DE LAMBALLE (1749–1792)

The slaughter did not end till the 6th. The prisons were then empty. The commune sanctioned the crime in paying the murderers, and the "watch committee" wrote to all the communes of France a circular in which one reads: "Warned that barbarous hordes were advancing against it, the commune of Paris hastens to inform its brethren in all departments that a ferocious party of conspirators, detained in the prisons, has been put to death by the people, acts of justice which appeared indispensable to the commune in order, by terrorism, to retain within bounds the legions of traitors, shut up within its walls, at the moment when patriots march out against the enemy; and, doubtless, the country, after the many treacheries which have led it to the brink of an abyss, will hasten to adopt the same useful and necessary means, and then all Frenchmen will be able to say with the Parisians: 'We advance against the enemy, and we leave behind us no brigands to cut the throats of our women and children.'"

This revolting recommendation was accepted only in four towns. At Rheims there were 8 victims; at Meaux, 14; at Lyons 1; at Orleans 3. There were also outbreaks in Cambray, Caen, Charleville, Couches, Gisors, Bordeaux, and Versailles, at each place one or more being killed. A decree of the assembly had ordered the transportation to Saumur of all persons arraigned at the supreme court at Orleans. Fifteen hundred Marseillese and volunteers escorted them, to conduct them to Paris, but at Étampes, in obedience to secret orders, turned toward Versailles. Hardly had the line of march reached the latter city when the volunteers threw themselves on the prisoners, and massacred 46; only 7 escaped. Amongst the victims was the minister Delessart and the duke de Brissac. Then the assassins betook themselves to the prisons and killed 23 persons detained for ordinary crimes.

POLITICAL OFFICE BARODA. LIBRARY

[1792 A.D.]

After these revolting days, the commune was more than ever master of Paris, of the assembly, and of the whole of France; anarchy was at its zenith. Commissioners were sent into the departments to incite the municipalities into following the commune's example; the convention elections were coerced, and Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Desmoulins, Panis, Sergent, Billaud-Varennes, Legendre, the duke of Orleans (who called himself "Philippe Égalité"), and others were nominated at Paris; disorder was favoured and riot ran loose. The members of the commune, above all those of the "watch committee," whose thefts are proved, devastated national property, wasted the public funds, and it is said helped in the pillage of the Garde-Meuble, a great part of whose treasures disappeared; the authors of the robbery were never convicted. They made themselves masters of the church's wealth, of the émigrés' goods, of the spoil of the victims of September, and they refused to be accountable to any authority. The most repulsive democracy had at its disposal the life and property of the citizens. The prisons were filled up again with some four to five hundred suspects. Ordinary criminals enjoyed an undisturbed career; one saw them openly tear jewels from women in the street, to make, as they said, an offering to the nation. No more safety for the individual, no longer any public order. The national guard, reconstructed by a decree of the assembly under the title of "armed sections," was entirely corrupt; it was abandoned by all rich and decent citizens, the pikemen alone being left.

Roland, in the face of so much disorder, nearly succumbed. With praiseworthy courage he exposed all the excesses of the commune; he dared to speak against the massacres at the prisons, he gave voice to the just appeal of the departments against the despotism in Paris. "The convention," he said, "will establish itself beyond the Loire if the capital does not offer its inhabitants security and liberty."

The Girondins bestirred themselves to throw off the yoke of these outlaws in municipal garb. Vergniaud described the massacres in the prisons as human butchery. "The Parisians," he said, "are no longer the slaves of crowned tyrants, but of the vilest of men, of the most execrable rascals. It is time to break such shameful bonds, to crush this new tyranny. Let the national assembly and its memory perish, if it pardons crimes which will imprint an ineffaceable stain on the name of France; by its energy it must teach all European nations that in spite of the calumnies with which they endeavour to brand France, there is yet, even in the midst of the present anarchy into which outlaws have plunged us, public virtue and respect for humanity."

The assembly forbade obedience to the commissioners of the commune; it held them responsible on the forfeit of their own heads for the safety of prisoners, it ordered citizens to resist by force all domiciliary visits. But they only augmented the anarchy without regaining their own powers. The assembly was even obliged, its members being menaced with assassination, to put their lives under the protection of the nation. The commune continued its excesses and tyrannies, and hope was now centred only in the convention.[g]

CARLYLE ON THE SEPTEMBER ATROCITIES

From Sunday afternoon (exclusive of intervals and pauses not final) till Thursday evening, there follow consecutively a Hundred Hours. Which hundred hours are to be reckoned with the hours of the Bartholomew

Butchery, of the Armagnac Massacres, Sicilian Vespers, or whatsoever is savagest in the annals of this world. Horrible the hour when man's soul, in its paroxysm, spurns asunder the barriers and rules; and shows what dens and depths are in it! For Night and Orcus, as we say, as was long prophesied, have burst forth, here in this Paris, from their subterranean imprisonment: hideous, dim-confused; which it is painful to look on; and yet which cannot, and indeed which should not, be forgotten. The Reader, who looks earnestly through this dim Phantasmagory of the Pit, will discern few fixed certain objects; and yet still a few.

So sit these sudden Courts of Wild-Justice, with the Prison-Registers before them; unwonted wild tumult howling all round; the Prisoners in dread expectancy within. Swift: a name is called; bolts jingle, a Prisoner is there. A few questions are put; swiftly this sudden Jury decides: Royalist Plotter or not? Clearly not; in that case, Let the Prisoner be enlarged with *Vive la nation*. Probably yea; then still, Let the Prisoner be enlarged, but without *Vive la nation;* or else it may run, Let the Prisoner be conducted to La Force. At La Force again their formula is, Let the Prisoner be conducted to the Abbaye.—"To La Force then!" Volunteer bailiffs seize the doomed man; he is at the outer gate; "enlarged," or "conducted," not into La Force, but into a howling sea; forth, under an arch of wild sabres, axes and pikes; and sinks, hewn asunder. And another sinks, and another; and there forms itself a piled heap of corpses, and the kennels begin to run red. Fancy the yells of these men, their faces of sweat and blood; the crueller shrieks of these women, for there are women too; and a fellow-mortal hurled naked into it all! Jourgniac de Saint-Méard[d] has seen battle, has seen an effervescent Regiment du Roi in mutiny; but the bravest heart may quail at this. The Swiss Prisoners, remnants of the Tenth of August, "clasped each other spasmodically," and hung back; gray veterans crying: "Mercy, Messieurs; ah, mercy!" Man after man is cut down; the sabres need sharpening, the killers refresh themselves from wine-jugs. Onward and onward goes the butchery; the loud yells wearying down into bass growls. The brave are not spared, nor the beautiful, nor the weak.

Princess de Lamballe has lain down on bed: "Madame, you are to be removed to the Abbaye." "I do not wish to remove; I am well enough here." There is a need-be for removing. She will arrange her dress a little, then; rude voices answer, "You have not far to go." She too is led to the hell-gate; a manifest Queen's Friend. She shivers back, at the sight of bloody sabres; but there is no return: Onwards! That fair hind head is cleft with the axe; the neck is severed. That fair body is cut in fragments; with indignities, and obscene horrors of moustachio *grands-lèvres*, which human nature would fain find incredible,—which shall be read in the original language only. She was beautiful, she was good, she had known no happiness. Young hearts, generation after generation, will think with themselves: O worthy of worship, thou king-descended, god-descended, and poor sister-woman! why was not I there; and some Sword Balmung or Thor's Hammer in my hand? Her head is fixed on a pike; paraded under the windows of the Temple; that a still more hated, a Marie Antoinette, may see. One Municipal, in the Temple with the Royal Prisoners at the moment, said, "Look out." Another eagerly whispered, "Do not look."

But it is more edifying to note what thrillings of affection, what fragments of wild virtues turn up in this shaking asunder of man's existence; for of these too there is a proportion. Note old Marquis Cazotte: he is doomed to die; but his young Daughter clasps him in her arms, with an

inspiration of eloquence, with a love which is stronger than very death: the heart of the killers themselves is touched by it; the old man is spared. Yet he was guilty, if plotting for his King is guilt: in ten days more, a Court of Law condemned him, and he had to die elsewhere; bequeathing his Daughter a lock of his old gray hair. Or note old M. de Sombreuil, who also had a Daughter:—My Father is not an Aristocrat: O good gentlemen, I will swear it, and testify it, and in all ways prove it; we are not; we hate Aristocrats! "Wilt thou drink Aristocrats' blood?" The man lifts blood (if universal Rumour can be credited); the poor maiden does drink. "This Sombreuil is innocent then!" Yes, indeed,—and now note, most of all, how the bloody pikes, at this news, do rattle to the ground; and the tiger-yells become bursts of jubilee over a brother saved; and the old man and his daughter are clasped to bloody bosoms, with hot tears; and borne home in triumph of *Vive la Nation*, the killers refusing even money!

The Constituted Authorities are of yesterday; all pulling different ways: there is properly no Constituted Authority, but every man is his own King; and all are kinglets, belligerent, allied, or armed-neutral, without king over them. "O everlasting infamy," exclaims Montgaillard,[e] "that Paris stood looking on in stupor for four days, and did not interfere!" Very desirable indeed that Paris had interfered; yet not unnatural that it stood even so, looking on in stupor. Paris is in death-panic, the enemy and gibbets at its door: whosoever in Paris has the heart to front death, finds it more pressing to do it fighting the Prussians, than fighting the killers of Aristocrats. Indignant abhorrence, as in Roland, may be here; gloomy sanction, premeditation or not, as in Marat and Committee of Salvation, may be there; dull disapproval, dull approval, and acquiescence in Necessity and Destiny, is the general temper.

This is the September Massacre, otherwise called "Severe Justice of the People." These are the Septemberers (*Septembriseurs*); a name of some note and lucency,—but lucency of the Nether-fire sort.

That a shriek of inarticulate horror rose over this thing, not only from French Aristocrats and Moderates, but from all Europe, and has prolonged itself to the present day, was most natural and right. The thing lay done, irrevocable; a thing to be counted beside some other things, which lie very black in our Earth's Annals, yet which will not erase therefrom. Sicilian Vespers, and "eight thousand slaughtered in two hours," are a known thing.

Kings themselves, not in desperation, but only in difficulty, have sat hatching their Bartholomew Business; and then, at the right moment, also on an Autumn Sunday, this very Bell (they say it is the identical metal) of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois was set a-pealing—with effect. Nay the same black boulder-stones of these Paris Prisons have seen Prison-massacres before now; men massacring countrymen, Burgundies massacring Armagnacs, whom they had suddenly imprisoned, till, as now, there were piled heaps of carcasses, and the streets ran red.

To shriek when certain things are acted, is proper and unavoidable. Nevertheless, articulate speech, not shrieking, is the faculty of man: when speech is not yet possible, let there be, with the shortest delay, at least—silence. Silence, accordingly, is the thing we recommend and practise. Nay, instead of shrieking more, it were perhaps edifying to remark, on the other side, what a singular thing Customs (in Latin, *Mores*) are; and how fitly the Virtue, *Vir-tus*, Manhood or Worth, that is in a man, is called his *Morality* or *Customariness*. Fell Slaughter, one of the most authentic products of the Pit you would say, once give it Customs, becomes War, with

Laws of War; and is Customary and Moral enough; and red individuals carry the tools of it girt round their haunches, not without an air of pride, — which do thou nowise blame. While, see! so long as it is but dressed in hodden or russet; and Revolution, less frequent than War, has not yet got its Laws of Revolution, but the hodden or russet individuals are Uncustomary — O shrieking beloved brother blockheads of Mankind, let us close those wide mouths of ours; let us cease shrieking, and begin considering! *f*

There can be no forgiveness for the butchers who put this eternal stain on French history, but the reader, especially the foreign reader, should try to regard the matter in perspective and proportion. One should not call the affair characteristically French, for there is no nation without the stain of horrible and unpardonable butcheries on its record. One should not call the affair typical of democratic sway, for the kings have slain their thousands for every one that was killed by the frenzied Paris mob. A few years later and there is a Society of the Exterminating Angel which marks the return to Spain of the expelled Bourbons and their priests. Carlyle, as above, has also pointed out that there is inconsistency in expressing horror at the taking of a thousand lives by men not in uniform, when paid soldiers are applauded for dutifully shooting down whole armies. But most important of all it is to avoid covering all Paris with the blame due only to the few grains of gunpowder that lurk in every city and explode at the first spark. These are the men who in our own day rob the corpses after a flood, and kill the wounded who resist robbery after a great fire. An eloquent defence of Paris in this matter has been voiced by Ternaux *h* who demands justice for the better element. *a*

TERNAUX'S APOLOGY FOR THE PEOPLE

After long years the memory of this tragic episode of the Terror weighs so heavily on the public conscience that certain historians have attempted to shift the responsibility for it in accordance with their personal prejudices. Nevertheless, all the questions they argue so hotly may be reduced to one only: Were the massacres of September the result of an instantaneous and irresistible impulse of the people of Paris, seized by a terrible fit of delirium at the news of the capture of Longwy and the siege of Verdun, and anxious, before attacking the invaders, to rid themselves, under the plea of public safety, of all the prisoners whom they had been taught to consider the accomplices of Brunswick and of the emigration? Or, were they not rather the crimes of a few wretches who, feeling the power slip through their fingers, resolved to seize it again in the blood-stained mud of the Abbaye ditch, and terrify the capital in order to remain its sole governors?

That certain authors who praise the commune of Paris for having "cleansed the prisons," or who are not ashamed to give this great crime the title "great act of popular justice," should have tried to extend its merit to the whole population of Paris, we can easily believe. But that historians, who hold up to the execration of future centuries both the massacres of September and their authors, should deliberately associate themselves with the shameless lies originally spread abroad by pamphleteers in the pay of the dictators of the Hôtel-de-Ville, and should try to lay on the people themselves the terrible responsibility of inconceivable crimes, must arouse in the minds of all men of good sense, of all true patriots, a great feeling of amazement.

It is a lie to history, it is a betrayal of the holy cause of humanity, it is a desertion from the most manifest interests of democracy, it is slander

against the "people," to take a few hundred wretches for it — wretches who were French only in name, human only in appearance, who went like cowards to seek their victims one by one in the cells of the Abbaye and La Force, sacrificing them in the light of day with all the refinement of cold-blooded cruelty, and insulting their too slow death by shameful sneers.

The people, the real people, consisting of industrious and honest workmen, with warm heart and patriotic fibre, young men of the middle class with generous hopes and dauntless courage, did not for an instant join with the scoundrels whom Maillard recruited in the kennels of the city. While the assassins of the *comité de surveillance* "opened a butcher shop of human flesh" (according to Vergniaud's energetic expression) in the prisons, the people, the real people, were at the Champ-de-Mars or at the enlistment platforms offering their purest blood for the defence of the country; they would have been ashamed to shed the blood of poor, weak, and defenceless creatures.

But, if the immense majority of the people of Paris were not accomplices to the massacre of the prisoners, how was it that they allowed it to be perpetrated? Because this crime was executed by order of the very men who should have enforced respect for the law; because the principal murderers wore the municipal scarf; because the murders were committed as an act of administration. When every principle is thus destroyed, every rôle thus inverted, men's consciences are troubled, the most courageous tremble, the most resolute hesitate, the living forces of a nation are paralysed. Brave men, having no longer a bond of union, seek each other, but hesitate to acknowledge each other, to reveal their thoughts; when at last indignation is about to unite all wills, to burst from every mouth, to give weapons to every arm, it is too late: the crime has been committed!

This is what happened on September 2nd, 1792. So, we, juror in the law-court of history, do not hesitate to answer the solemn and delicate question asked above, by this maturely deliberated verdict: On our soul and conscience, in the sight of God and man, the people of Paris were not guilty of the crime of September.

Who were the guilty and what were their motives? The guilty were Marat, Danton, Robespierre, Manuel, Hébert, Billaud-Varennes, Panis, Sergent, Fabre-d'Églantine, Camille Desmoulins, and a dozen others less known, members of the committee of surveillance or only of the general council of the commune. Marat was the first to have the idea, and he vaunted it in his infamous journal and in his disgraceful advertisements. Danton also looked his crime in the face and did not hesitate: "We must frighten the royalists," he said; and, in order to do so, he coldly condemned to death more than a thousand victims. His hand is to be seen on all sides; it was to him that men applied for orders, and to him all communications were brought.

On September 2nd, as on August 10th, Robespierre kept partly in the shade. The evening before he had shot a Parthian arrow at his particular enemies, the Girondins, denouncing them as Brunswick's accomplices. The warrants of arrest issued against Roland, Brissot, and thirty other deputies, at the very moment when the massacres began in the prisons, showed clearly enough that the accusation had had effect. Later on, it is true, Robespierre declared that he had cursed the days of September; but what did he do to prevent them — he, the popular man above all others, the tribune who each day came to give notice of his orders to the legislative assembly, the idol of the Jacobin Club and of the general council of the commune?

How is it possible to divide the responsibility which weighs on each of these two men? We will leave this task to someone who cannot be suspected of ultra-revolutionary ideas. "Between Danton," says M. Louis Blanc,[i] "who assisted in the massacres because he approved of them, and Robespierre who did not prevent them, although he deplored them, I do not hesitate to declare that Robespierre was the guiltier."

As for the motives which caused the crime of September to be imagined, meditated, prepared, and executed, there were two kinds. The most important thing for certain organisers of the massacres was to establish themselves in the dictatorship which they had usurped; for others it was essential, at whatever cost, "to show no accounts"; for all it was essential to place a river of blood between them and their enemies.

The organisers of the massacres only half succeeded in their plans. Paris was not roused to a paroxysm of rage, it was only struck with stupor; there was even, a few days later, a somewhat violent reaction, which, for one moment, permitted the hope that liberty was not to be destroyed and lost in the most terrible of all tyrannies, the tyranny of the street. Almost the whole of another year was required by Danton, Robespierre, and Billaud-Varennes to establish their blood-thirsty dictatorship without opposition. The usurpers of August 10th had then two accounts to settle: the first with those whom they had arrested in consequence of their domiciliary visits — they put an end to it by murdering them on September 2nd; the second with those who wished to force them to restore what they had stolen — they settled this on May 31st, 1793, by driving them from the national representation, and on October 31st, 1793, by sending them to the scaffold.[k]

THE ROYALIST INVASION: VALMY

The allies in the meantime had not shown any activity in profiting by the dissensions and disorganisation of the French. The emperor Francis, having but lately ascended his throne, had not sufficiently matured his preparations; and the summer was far advanced ere the campaign commenced. On the 25th of July the famed manifesto of the duke of Brunswick had summoned the French to return to their allegiance.[1] It concluded by threatening that if the château of the Tuileries were forced or insulted, or any violence offered to the royal family, the emperor and king would take exemplary vengeance by delivering up the city of Paris to military execution and total subversion. This imprudent threat indicated the very crime that could most fully set it at nought: in a few days after the receipt of the manifesto at Paris, the Tuileries had been stormed, and the king hurled from his throne into a dungeon. The insurrection of the 10th of August was the reply of the Parisians to the duke of Brunswick, or rather to Calonne, who had drawn up the document. The rapid march of an overwhelming army upon the French capital could alone have given weight or sense to so haughty a menace.

The duke of Brunswick, however, had not this overwhelming force. His army, including the corps of émigrés, did not exceed 80,000 men, whilst the Austrians, prepared to support him on the right and left, did not muster half the stipulated number. The failure of this invasion is universally and

[1 It is said that the duke of Brunswick did not approve of this proclamation; that De Limon wrote it and Artois approved it; that the violent last paragraph was added without the knowledge of Brunswick; that the king, Louis XVI, and Marie Antoinette had inspired it through Mallet du Pau, and that it was more violent than either wished.]

exclusively attributed to the duke; whereas a great part of the cause lies in the simple fact that the potent monarchies of Prussia and Austria thought proper to attempt the conquest of France with no greater force than that which their enemies could without effort oppose to them. The task of invasion requires something more than equality of strength. This the duke knew, and hence the feebleness, the incertitude, the tardiness of his operations.

The French army seemed no doubt to offer itself as an easy prey. Its first feat was a panic flight. It was distracted by the disorders of the capital. La Fayette tampered with his troops, and sought to array them against the anarchists. Failing in this, he fled, and the army remained without a leader until the appointment of Dumouriez. The duke of Brunswick might indeed have taken advantage of this disorganised state of the French army, have attacked and routed the portion of it under La Fayette. A Bonaparte would not have hesitated. The duke, over wary, feared to leave the smallest fortress unreduced behind him. He laid siege to Longwy, took it, then invested Verdun with the same success. In the capture of these towns was spent the month of August; and early in September Dumouriez, promoted to the chief command, was able to take active measures of defence.

CHARLES FRANÇOIS DUMOURIEZ (1739–1823)

It was just at this moment, when the French had recovered unity and force, under a talented leader, that the Prussian monarch and his general thought fit to shake off dilatoriness, and march boldly towards the capital. The duke of Brunswick, indeed, still deprecated the hardihood of the scheme, for which he deemed his army not sufficiently strong. A month previous, it would have been more practicable; now, Dumouriez, with the quick eye of military genius, had, by forced marches, occupied all the passes of the forest of Argonne, the only route of the allied army leading towards the capital.

The grand merit of that general was his moral courage. When all his countrymen despaired of their cause — when the Parisian legislature meditated a retreat beyond the Loire, and the Parisian mob made what they considered to be the last use of their sovereignty, in massacring their imprisoned enemies, Dumouriez never once lost confidence. "Argonne is the French Thermopylæ," wrote he; "but I shall be more fortunate than Leonidas." The ministry wrote to him in a panic to retreat, to come to their aid, to retire beyond the Marne. Dumouriez mocked their fears; and even when the passages of the Argonne were forced, he took another position at Ste. Menehould, and summoned the several divisions of the army,

scattered by the Prussians, having forced their lines, to rally thither, and stand again on the defensive. The tardiness of the Prussians here again saved the French. Strong detachments from Metz and from Lille were allowed to join Dumouriez; who, thus reinforced, determined to hold firm in the camp and position which he occupied, and which formed a line of heights protected by the Aisne and the Auve, and by the marshes on their banks.

The road to Paris was indeed open to the Prussians, if they wished to leave Dumouriez in their rear; but their object was now to capture that general and his army. With this view the king of Prussia by his personal order hastened forward his divisions to cut off the retreat of the French, occupying the road betwixt them and the capital. Dispositions were then made for the attack, concerning the success of which the monarch was sanguine, and his general by no means so. The latter, however, acted in obedience to the ardour of the king, and, on the 20th of September, a cannonade opened on both sides, and was supposed to be the prelude to an engagement. The advanced division of the French was at Valmy, an eminence surmounted by a mill. The duke of Brunswick formed his troops in column of attack, and advanced to carry this point by assault. Despite the cannonade, the Prussian bayonets already glistened at the foot of the eminence; the French unmoved showed themselves ready for the charge, and gave vent to their ardour in shouts of *Vive la nation!* This bold shout was sufficient to appal the duke of Brunswick, and awaken all his doubts of success. An instant order recalled the troops that were on the point of attacking. The assault was abandoned, and the French were left to exult in the irresolution, if not in the pusillanimity of their antagonist.

Such was the cannonade, miscalled the battle, of Valmy, which, however unproductive of loss or of glory, proved as decisive as a victory to Dumouriez. Henceforth the retreat of the Prussians, the unfulfilment of all their high menaces and schemes, became inevitable. Unable to force the French position, or leave it behind; finding it difficult to support themselves in an enemy's country, with the Argonne betwixt them and their magazines; afflicted by disease as well as by want, the Prussians commenced their retreat ten days after the affair of Valmy. There were some attempts made at negotiation; but the ruling powers at Paris would listen to none whilst an enemy trod the territory of France. The retreat of the Prussians, who but a few days since menaced Paris with destruction, was inexplicable to Europe, and has been accounted for as proceeding from a purchase or a bribe. The assertion is unproved and improbable. The duke of Brunswick retired with his troops towards the Rhine. The republicans re-entered Longwy and Verdun, and many of the inhabitants of the latter town, who had betrayed attachment to the royal cause, suffered under the guillotine; amongst these victims were six young ladies, who had offered a bouquet of flowers, in token of congratulation, to the king of Prussia.[b]

Thus, in its very first campaign, new France, by means of its young soldiers trained under fire, repulsed the attack of the kings, and grasped territories already half-French, that Louis XIV himself had not been able to seize. The great German poet Goethe was in the Prussian army at Valmy, not as a soldier but as a sight-seer; for it was less a war that the allies were making than a journey to Paris, a rapid flight or progress having at its end a triumphal entry. He shared their presumptuous confidence, a confidence that the cannon of Valmy were soon to destroy. At night, around the camp-fires, the poet was asked to dispel, with his usual cheerful vivacity, the gloomy presentiments

that were assailing all. But he was himself in a sombre mood and remained for a long time silent. When at last he spoke his voice was grave and solemn, and his words were merely these: "In this place and on this day there commences a new epoch in the history of the world."[l]

THE REPUBLIC PROCLAIMED (SEPTEMBER 21ST, 1792)

The state of things had of course its influence in the elections, more especially of the capital, where not to be royalist, but to be moderately republican, brought instant denunciation and arrest. Robespierre and Danton were the first names that came from the electoral urn; the famous David, Legendre, Collot-d'Herbois, Philippe Égalité [duke of Orleans], and Marat were their colleagues. The members elected by the city of Paris, says Thiers,[k] "consisting of some tradesmen, a butcher, an actor, an engraver, a painter, a lawyer, two or three journalists, and a fallen prince, did not ill represent the confusion and variety of personages that figured in this great capital."

The national convention assembled on the 20th of September, the very day in which the Prussians quailed at Valmy, and gave up victory to the cause of republicanism. The members of the Gironde had all been returned, and even their numbers reinforced; so indocile as yet were the provinces to the rule of the Jacobins. The Girondists occupied the Right of the assembly:[1] Robespierre and his comrades took post on the upper benches of the Left, in order to be near to and in communication with their supporters, the noisy audience of the public galleries. From this position the Jacobin party was called the Mountain, whilst those members who filled the middle place, both with respect to their seats and principles, were designated the Plain, or the Marsh. Barrère was considered the chief of this central and at first neutral party; principally consisting of men new to political questions or life, and whose public education was yet to be completed. These formed the majority of the convention: on their votes and leanings evidently depended the march of both legislature and government. At the present moment they were inspired by extreme respect for the Gironde. Pétion, one of the most influential of that party, was elected president; whilst Vergniaud, Condorcet, and Brissot filled the office of secretaries.[b]

The legislative assembly, which since the 10th of August had been sitting permanently, was informed on the 20th, by a deputation, that the national convention was formed, and the legislature terminated. The two assemblies had merely to resolve the one into the other, and the convention proceeded to occupy the hall of the legislative.

Manuel, procurator-syndic of the commune, who had been suspended after the 20th of June with Pétion, and become extremely popular on account of that suspension; who had subsequently taken office with the furious usurpers of the commune, but retreated from them, and drawn towards the Girondists at sight of the massacres in the Abbaye — Manuel, as early as the 21st, made a proposition which excited murmurs amongst the enemies of the Gironde. "Citizen-representatives," said he, "it is fitting that everything here bear a character of dignity and grandeur calculated to awe the universe. I move that the president of France be lodged in the national palace of the Tuileries; that he be preceded by the public force

[1 Girondists, a part of the Left of the former legislative assembly, was now the Right.]

and the symbols of the law; and that the citizens rise at his approach." At these words the Jacobin Chabot, and Tallien, the secretary of the commune, protested with vehemence against a ceremonial imitated from royalty. Chabot said that the representatives of the people ought to assimilate themselves to the citizens from whose ranks they came — to the *sans-culottes*, who formed the majority of the nation. Tallien added that the president of the convention should be sought for in a garret, since it was in such abodes that genius and virtue dwelt. The proposition of Manuel was rejected, and the enemies of the Gironde asserted that it had intended to decree sovereign honours to its chief, Pétion.

After this motion had been disposed of, a multitude of others succeeded, without pause or order. On all sides the wish was expressed to record by authentic declarations the sentiments which animated the assembly and France. Various demands were made, to the effect that the new constitution should be based on absolute equality, the sovereignty of the people decreed, hatred sworn to royalty, to a dictatorship, to a triumvirate, to every individual authority; and the penalty of death pronounced against whomsoever should propose any project with that tendency. Danton put an end to all these motions, by procuring a decree that the new constitution should be valid only after being sanctioned by the people. It was subjoined that the existing laws should provisionally continue to have effect; the authorities, not displaced, be provisionally maintained; and the taxes levied as before, until the new systems of contribution were organised.

After these motions and decrees, Manuel, Collot-d'Herbois, and Gregoire entered upon the question of royalty, and demanded that its abolition should be forthwith pronounced. The people, said they, had just been declared sovereign, but they could not really be so until they were delivered from a rival authority — that of kings. The assembly, all the galleries, rose with one accord to express a unanimous reprobation of royalty. But Bazire wished a solemn discussion upon so momentous a question. "What occasion is there to discuss," exclaimed Gregoire, "when everyone is of the same opinion? Courts are the workshops of crime, the furnace of corruption. The history of kings is the martyrology of nations. Since we are all equally impressed with these truths, what need of discussion?"

The debate was in fact closed. A profound silence prevailed, and, according to the unanimous declaration of the assembly, the president pronounced royalty abolished in France. This decree was hailed with universal acclamation; its publication was instantly voted, as likewise its transmission to the armies and all the municipalities.

When the institution of a republic was thus proclaimed, the Prussians still menaced the country. Dumouriez, as we have related, had fixed himself at Ste. Menehould, and the cannonade of the 21st, so auspicious for the French arms, was not yet known at Paris. The next day, the 22nd, Billaud-Varennes proposed to date, no longer from the year 4 of liberty, but from the year 1 of the republic. This proposition was adopted. The year 1789 was no longer considered as the commencement of liberty, and the new republican era opened that very day, the 22nd of September.

In the evening the cannonade of Valmy was reported, and joy beamed on every countenance. On the petition of the citizens of Orleans, who complained of their magistrates, it was decreed that all the members of administrative bodies and tribunals should be re-elected, and that the conditions of eligibility, as fixed by the constitution of 1791, should be deemed null. It was declared no longer necessary to select the judges from lawyers, nor the

administrators from a certain class of proprietors. The legislative assembly had already abolished the mark of silver, and conferred upon all citizens at the age of majority the electoral franchise. The convention effaced the last traces of distinction, by calling all the citizens to all, the most diverse, functions. Thus was commenced the system of absolute equality.[k]

GIRONDISTS *vs.* JACOBINS

Immediately now broke out the fierce war betwixt the Mountain and the Girondists, the most inveterate and fatal that the annals of any assembly record, and at the same time the most important to be studied, as a phase which every revolution in its downward course is likely to present.

In common with the Jacobins, the Girondists had warred upon royalty to its destruction. Aristocracy had been proscribed. Universal equality of political and civil rights had been decreed. There scarcely remained a public principle on which two republican parties could differ. Personal hatred, however, supplied any want of the kind; and royalty and republicanism never worked each other such mutual ill as did these parties, the colours of whose political creeds differed but by a shade. The Girondists were aristocratic in comparison with the Mountain: they were men of education and of talent.

Both parties courted popular favour, and pretended to lead the popular cause. But the Girondists were merely amateur democrats, would-be rabble, not the actual rabble itself, as Marat and his tribe were. And these were indignant that men respectable in birth and profession should dare to assume the place of representatives of the people. Favourers, as the Girondists were, to a certain degree, of law and social order, they required some more certain and congenial support than that of the mob. The middle classes, united, organised, and armed, would have been their natural auxiliaries; but the middle classes of the capital had supported the constitutionalists, or *feuillants*, and with them had been crushed by the Jacobins and Girondists themselves, during the latter months of the legislative assembly. The Girondists had favoured the insurrection of the 20th of June; and by having done so, by having fatally condescended to make use of the popular arm, had rendered themselves powerless to resist the movements of either the 10th of August or the 2nd of September. By the same fault they had alienated the middle classes of the Parisians, who thenceforth had, either in timidity or zeal, become blended in the ranks of the Jacobins. The Girondists had, however, a numerous body of partisans of the middle classes in the provinces; and to bring a chosen band of these to protect them against the insurrectionary spirit of the lower orders in Paris, became one of their early endeavours.

Of the ministry, or executive council, established on the king's suspension, the Girondists were indeed the majority; but the honest simplicity of Roland and his friends was overmatched by the energy of Danton. The Gironde was indignant at the massacre which had been perpetrated, and at the criminal stain cast by such deeds upon the Revolution. To wipe this away, to prevent the recurrence of these acts of blood, to disarm and reprove at least, if not to punish the perpetrators, was the first effort of the party now seated on the Right of the assembly.

Tidings arrived that assassinations, similar to those of the capital, were commencing in the provinces, no doubt produced by the circulars and instructions of the Jacobins. The choler of the Girondists instantly burst forth: and, on the proposal of Buzot, a triple decree was passed, appointing

a committee to inquire into the state of France and of the capital; to prepare a law against the provocation to murder, and also a plan providing a guard, to be drawn from the eighty-three departments, for the protection of the national convention. In this first outbreaking of the storm against them in the convention, Robespierre and his friends preserved silence. They raised some trifling objections, but dared not to oppose the decree: they rather seemed to affect moderation, and to deprecate the wrath of the Gironde.

Lasource, a Protestant clergyman, and member of the moderate party, attended a Jacobin meeting, and observed that the agitators aspired to establish a dictatorship in their own favour. He feared to see Paris become, what Rome was in the empire, the tyrant of the world, while itself was the slave of sedition. Rebecqui, deputy for Marseilles, also exclaimed: "I assert that there does exist a party in this assembly which aspires to establish the dictatorship: and the chief of this party — I will name him — is Robespierre!"

Amidst the tumult caused by this denunciation, Danton obtained possession of the tribune, and endeavoured to prevent these dissensions from going further. To avert the attack from Robespierre, he spoke of himself, "who had served the cause of liberty with all the energy of his temperament"; and of Marat, with whom indeed he affected not to be on terms of friendship; but whose violence he represented as excusable, since his long concealment from vexation and arrest, in caverns and subterraneous hiding-places, had soured and corrupted his temper. To counterbalance the accusation brought against the Mountain, Danton insinuated that there was another party in the assembly, whose object was to partition France into as many republics as provinces, and thus to destroy the unity of the country. This was aimed at the Gironde. Danton proposed to decree the pain of death against whosoever should entertain either of these projects, whether the dictatorship or federalism.

The accusation, thus adroitly parried by Danton, might have been set at rest, had not Robespierre thought proper to undertake his own defence. He enumerated the acts of his past life with a cold arrogance, and in a speech so tedious and dull that even his own friends called out to him, in impatience, to have done with his *kyrielle*.

As Marat was alluded to in the debate, he, too, thought it necessary to enter upon his exculpation. His appearance at the tribune excited such an acclamation of disgust that to make himself heard was impossible. But the accusations against him were redoubled. Cambon produced a kind of placard, signed Marat, in which a dictatorship, or despotic triumvirate, was called for as the only means of public safety. It became necessary to hear the monster's defence. Taking from his head a cap, such as was worn by the people, Marat placed it on the tribune, and facing the general outcry, with distorted and nervous smile, he began: "I have a great many personal enemies in this assembly." "All of us! all of us!" was the clamorous interruption and reply of the greater part of the members.

Marat undauntedly continued: "I have many personal enemies in this assembly. I recall them to a sense of shame. I exhort them to cease their furibund clamours. The members for the city of Paris are accused of aspiring to the triumvirate, or the dictatorship. It is merely because I am one of them that this accusation is made. I owe it to Danton, and to Robespierre, to declare that they have always opposed the project of a dictatorship, which I have never ceased to recommend in my writings. I have a lance to break with them on that point. I am myself the first and the only writer in

France who has proposed and supported the dictatorship, as the sole means of crushing traitors and conspirators. I am alone to blame or to be condemned for this. But first hear me.

"Amidst the machinations of a perfidious king, an abominable court, and of false patriots, who sold the cause of liberty in two successive assemblies, can you reproach me with having imagined the only means of public safety, with having invoked the hatchet of popular vengeance on the guilty heads? No, you dare not. The people would disavow you — the people, who, at length, in order to escape from tyrants and traitors, felt the necessity of turning dictator itself.

"Believe me, I shuddered as much as any of you at these terrible insurrections; and it was to obviate the necessity of their recurrence that I wished to see the popular force guided by one firm hand. Had this been understood at the taking of the Bastille, five hundred heads would have fallen, and tranquillity would have been secured. But no; events were left to themselves, and vengeance was abandoned to the people. And what has been the consequence? A hundred thousand patriots have been slaughtered, and a hundred thousand more are menaced with a similar fate. At any rate, to prove to you that the dictator, or the triumvir, which I recommended, was not to answer to the vulgar idea of a tyrant, my proposal was that his authority should last but for a few days; that his only office should be to condemn traitors; and that this dread magistrate himself should have always a cannon-ball attached to his leg, in order that he might continue under the hand of the people. Such was the dream of my patriotism; and if your intellects have not elevation enough to comprehend it, so much the worse for you."

While some were disgusted with the arrogance and blood-thirstiness of this speech, and others amused even to laughter by his impertinence, the too flexible majority were struck by the ferocious energy of Marat's character and views. The new deputies of the Plain, who had hitherto looked with abhorrence on the monster, here submitted to listen and learned to tolerate him. Boileau read an address to the people, signed Marat, and published that very morning. Its tenor was as follows: "Fifty years of anarchy are before us; and the only way of avoiding them is by appointing a dictator, a true patriot and statesman. O babbling people, did you but know how to act!"

An indescribable tumult took place on the perusal of this pithy address. "To prison with the wretch! to the guillotine!" was the general cry. The accusation of Marat was proposed. He again demanded to be heard, and once more took possession of the tribune with increased confidence and effrontery. "As to that writing which the member has denounced, I am far from disavowing it. A falsehood has never passed my lips, and fear is a stranger to my heart." Nevertheless Marat proceeded to state that the address just produced was written a week back, and suppressed, but republished that morning against his knowledge by his printer. Marat read them a more moderate article from a new journal which he had just commenced: "Had I not written a moderate paragraph this morning, you would have delivered me over to the sword of justice. But no, I had still a mode of escape from persecution. With this," said he, drawing forth a pistol, and putting it to his forehead, "I would have blown out my brains at this tribune. Such was to have been the reward of three years' sufferings, imprisonments, wakings and watchings, fears and labours, privations and dangers. As it is, however, I shall remain amongst you, and brave your fury."

Had the Gironde remained firm, and pressed the condemnation, at least of Marat, the final victory might have been on its side; but they gave up the struggle, in lassitude, or in contempt of their enemies; deeming, unwisely, that the thunders of their eloquence were sufficient to blight the brows and humble the power of the Jacobins. The newly returned deputies, who occupied the Plain, learned in this famous debate that the Jacobins were not altogether the monsters which they had been represented; or, if this was difficult, they at least saw that there was firmness, conviction, and even talent, in their monstrosity. The influence of the Gironde was shaken. The termination of this long and fiery debate proves forcibly this effect. It ended by a decree, declaring the republic one and indivisible; thus guarding, as it were, against the supposed federalism of the Gironde, rather than against the renewal of massacre and the establishment of a dictatorship by the Mountain. Nothing could be more inconsequential and absurd than such a vote succeeding such a debate; nor can anything more strongly paint the vacillation of the assembly and the weakness of its leading party.

ROBESPIERRE ADDRESSING THE ASSEMBLY

Whilst all the attention and zeal of the national assembly were spent in these quarrels, the Prussians were still at Ste. Menehould. But not even the menacing presence of a foreign enemy could distract the Mountain and the Gironde from the canine combat in which they tore each other, and struggled for mastery. Day after day it was renewed. The convention called for the accounts of the commune, and ordered its minister to draw up a report, which fully disclosed the system of fraud, murder, and anarchy established at the Hôtel-de-Ville. Yet, in spite of this, the municipality held its ground, and defied the efforts of its enemies.

The national convention at this time had the singular infelicity of displaying at once all the disadvantage of party, as well as all the disadvantages of wanting it. The public weal and fortunes were absolutely forgotten in the struggle betwixt personal foes; and at the same time there was so little concert, foresight, and party organisation, that the Gironde was continually marred and crossed in its attempts to restore order and consolidate liberty by the trimming timid inertness of the Centre or Plain. On the 29th of October, after hearing one of the courageous reports of the home-minister, an anonymous letter was read, giving an account of the efforts of the Jacobins to blacken the Gironde and excite a new insurrection to get rid of the *cabal Roland*. "They will hear of none but Robespierre," continued the letter.

The passions of the Girondists were excited. Louvet rushed to the tribune, instantly and solemnly accused Robespierre, and poured forth an extemporaneous philippic of unusual force and eloquence. He commenced by relating the rise of the anarchists, whom he described as "a party feeble in number and in means, strong in boldness and immorality," appearing in the club of the Jacobins not earlier than the January preceding, and soon

driving the Girondists from them by their violence and the noisy aid of the galleries. "At first," continued Louvet, "they astonished rather than disquieted us, until we saw them commence to make war upon all talent, all distinction, all who were not of their coterie. They soon set up an idol in Robespierre.

"But what are their claims to popularity and rule? The insurrection of the 10th of August, which they attribute solely to themselves. I tell them, the revolution of that day belongs to us all—to the faubourgs, that rose to a man; to the brave federals, whom these men refused to admit within the walls. The revolution of the 10th of August belongs to the two hundred courageous deputies who issued the decree suspending Louis. To us all belongs the glory of the 10th of August. But that of the 2nd of September, atrocious conspirators, is yours—all yours—yours alone! Ye have made it your claim and your boast. Ye have named us, in your sanguinary pride, the patriots of August; yourselves, the patriots of September! May the distinction endure, for our justification and your eternal shame!

"The people, ye say, participated in these murders. Else, ask ye, why did they not prevent them? Why? Because the tutelary authority of Pétion was chained; because Roland spoke in vain; because Danton, minister of justice, did not speak at all; because the presidents of the forty-eight sections, ready to repress such disorders, waited for the summons that never arrived; because the officers of the municipality, wearing their scarfs of office, presided at these executions. But the legislative assembly? Representatives of the people! avenge its powerlessness. For that powerlessness, to which your predecessors were then reduced, was, even amongst the enormous crimes of the day, the most audacious and most fatal of all. What could the legislative assembly do—tormented, degraded, menaced by an insolent demagogue, who came to the bar to dictate its decrees; who returned to the commune but to denounce it; and who dared to threaten the executive council with the tocsin?"

This vehement apostrophe roused to such a pitch the indignation of the assembly against Robespierre, that his instant condemnation seemed inevitable. For a long time it refused even to hear his defence; which, nevertheless, when quiet was restored, he was utterly unable to enter upon. He demanded a week to prepare it, and his demand was granted. A week, however, was more than sufficient to allow the passion of the majority to subside; and when Robespierre appeared to pronounce his elaborate defence he no longer addressed an exasperated audience. Applauses as loud as those which cheered the resentment of Louvet hailed his reply. Louvet in vain sought to resume his accusation. The accusation was set aside by the order of the day, and the defence of Robespierre was ordered to be printed.

During this war of parties, Dumouriez paid a short visit to the capital. He was welcomed at the bar of the convention with applauses and embraces; in society, with fêtes, as the hero of the day. His aim was to stand well with all parties, in consequence of which both the most austere of the Gironde and the most ferocious of the Mountain suspected him. He had punished a regiment of his revolutionary soldiers for massacring some emigrant deserters. The Jacobins commissioned Marat to question the general on the subject; and Marat chose the moment when Dumouriez was present at a ball given in his honour, to intrude in his office of inquisitor. "It is you whom they call Marat," observed Dumouriez to the monster's summons; "I cannot hold converse with such a person." Still the general preserved his intimacy with Danton, who, though his hands were deeply imbrued in September's blood,

was not yet decided to join the knot of Robespierre, and who wavered betwixt the anarchists and the Gironde. Dumouriez, as well as every historian of the Revolution, censures the Gironde for not having conciliated Danton, who alone could have combated Robespierre. But they abhorred the minister of massacre.

BATTLE OF JEMMAPES (NOVEMBER 6TH, 1792)

The victorious general cared, indeed, little for either party: his only thought was conquest; his plan, to invade and subdue Belgium. It was to cause the adoption of this, and to prepare the means, that he visited Paris. The moment was one of elation. Custine had taken the important fortress of Mainz, the key of the Rhine, by surprise; Savoy and Nice were occupied by French armies; the Austrians had retreated from Lille,[1] as the Prussians from Valmy; and Dumouriez was determined, despite the lateness of the season, to assume the offensive.

The Austrians, about 25,000 strong, occupied several villages upon heights in front of Mons: the central village was Jemmapes. Despite these advantages in being entrenched and long stationed on the ground, Dumouriez attacked them on the 6th of November; his right, his centre, and his left each formed in column of attack. Both wings hesitated as they came into action. A brigade suddenly gave way; the habitude of sudden panic had not yet been forgotten by the French; and the entire body of the centre, suffering under the fire of the Austrian batteries, offered symptoms of backwardness and disorder. Had the Austrians been alert, a charge would have here told more effectually than all the batteries of Mons: one brave man, however, rallied the brigade. It is a singular proof of the revolutionary confusion of ranks, that the hero who rode up to this brigade, and brought it to resume at once its position and its sense of duty, was Renaud, a valet in the service of General Dumouriez. The centre itself was rallied by its commander, an officer of more illustrious birth, the then duke of Chartres, later duke of Orleans, and king of the French. Forming the most willing and brave into a close column, the young duke led them on to the attack of Jemmapes; their reawakened ardour carried everything before them, and drove the Austrians from their redoubts. The left being at the same time successful, the victory was complete. The vanquished lost 6,000 men, and Belgium fell at once into the possession of Dumouriez. That general made his triumphant entry into Brussels on the 14th of November.

THE KING IS BROUGHT TO TRIAL (DECEMBER, 1792)

It was at this moment of universal triumph over foreign enemies, that the republicans felt all their vindictive fury excited against the unfortunate Louis XVI. If the insurrection of August and the massacre of September had each its excuse in the danger and panic excited by foreign invasion,

[1 Of the vain siege of Lille, Carlyle says: "The Austrian Archduchess (Queen's Sister) will herself see red artillery fired: in their overhaste to satisfy an Archduchess, 'two mortars explode and kill thirty persons.' It is in vain; Lille, often burning, is always quenched again; Lille will not yield. The very boys deftly wrench the matches out of fallen bombs: 'a man clutches a rolling ball with his hat, which takes fire; when cool, they crown it with a *bonnet rouge*.' Memorable also be that nimble Barber, who when the bomb burst beside him, snatched up a sherd of it, introduced soap and lather into it, crying '*Voilà mon plat à barbe*' (my new shaving-dish), and shaved 'fourteen people' on the spot. Bravo, thou nimble Shaver; worthy to shave old spectral Redcloak, and find treasures!—On the eighth day of this desperate siege, the

THE DUKE DE CHARTRES AT JEMMAPES
(From the painting by Le Dru)

[1792 A.D.]

the crime of immolating the royal victim could now have no such plea. The decapitation of Charles I is intelligible; it deprived royalism of a talented chief, a powerful partisan. The English republicans struck the lion of the forest, who had long held them at bay; the French employed equal fury in spilling the blood of the lamb, nay, in previously torturing the victim. After the sack of the Tuileries, the legislative assembly had assigned the Luxembourg as the residence of Louis; the municipality, however, thought the Temple more secure. They transferred the royal family thither, denying them the commodious apartments that even the Temple contained, and shutting them up in the small tower, where they were huddled together and visited with every privation and indignity. One domestic only was allowed them; the municipal officers penetrated at all times into the apartments; and openings in their dungeon doors left them continually under the eye of their guards. It was here that the queen was summoned to behold the head of her friend [the princess de Lamballe] borne on a pole; and hence she might daily overhear the proclamations or calumnies which the criers took care to vociferate under the windows of the Temple. After some time, Louis was separated from his family, and denied the sole consolation of his captivity, that of instructing his infant son.

What was to be his ultimate fate? It became urgent to decide. Petitions had been already presented, one especially from Auxerre, demanding not only his trial, but condemnation to death. Many of the French, under the influence of political rabies, deemed the Revolution incomplete till it had displayed the scene of a monarch's execution. England had done as much. Should history tell that she had surpassed France in audacity? It was far less the supposed guilt of Louis than the effect to be produced by his death that urged the fanatic revolutionists to demand it. National vanity sought to astonish Europe and to affright its kings, overlooking the crime of sacrificing the innocent. Another feeling, stronger than vanity, worked towards the hapless monarch's destruction. This was the necessity all persons and parties felt to rival each other in zeal, and to outbid each other for popularity: that dread of the opinion of one's fellows, that of being thought lukewarm. The whole nation, whilst it invoked the goddess of liberty, was in reality prostrating itself before the demon of terror.

However the men of the Revolution might esteem themselves bound to disrespect the monarch's legitimate rights, there remained those which the constitution established by the first national assembly, and sworn to by the second, had secured to him: one of the first articles of this declared the king inviolable. This, however, was set aside. The convention decreed that itself should form the court of justice to try Louis. Even this, however, did not satisfy Robespierre, who argued that the monarch was already and *de facto* condemned. "People do not judge like courts; they pass not sentence, but merely send forth their thunder. They do not condemn kings, they annihilate them. As for me," continued Robespierre, "I abhor the pain of death, of which your laws are so prodigal, and I entertain for Louis neither love nor hate; I detest merely his misdeeds. I demanded the abolition of the pains of death in the constituent assembly; it is not my fault if my proposal was deemed a moral and political heresy. Since, however, this great principle

sixth day of October, Austria finding it fruitless, draws off, with no pleasurable consciousness; rapidly, Dumouriez tending thitherward; and Lille too, black with ashes and smoulder, but jubilant sky-high, flings its gates open. The *Plat à barbe* became fashionable; 'no Patriot of an elegant turn,' says Mercier, several years afterwards, 'but shaves himself out of the splinter of a Lille bomb.'"]

of clemency has not been extended to minor offenders, how would you apply it to the king, the chief of criminals?"

The Girondists, during this early discussion of the question, kept their opinions in reserve: they wished the king's condemnation, not his death, yet feared to risk their popularity in endeavouring to save him. A circumstance occurred at this very time to render their position more delicate. A secret closet, formed of iron, was discovered by Roland in the royal apartments at the Tuileries; it contained documents of the connection of many popular chiefs with the court: Mirabeau's intrigues were brought to light, and the busts of that patriot were instantly thrown down, and his body torn from the Pantheon. The Gironde was inculpated, slightly indeed, but still sufficiently to paralyse any courageous resolves on their part to save the monarch.

In an early sitting, Buzot, one of this party, seeking either to cleanse it of the suspicion of being royalist, or to cast a similar accusation on the Mountain, moved that the penalty of death should be decreed against whosoever should even propose the re-establishment of royalty. Merlin, a Jacobin, thoughtlessly, and from a love of opposition, objected; urging that it belonged only to the people in their primary assemblies to decide such a question.

This afforded a triumph in turn to the Gironde, who instantly exclaimed that they had discovered the design of the Jacobins to raise up a king, either in the person of one of their demagogue chiefs, or in that of the duke of Orleans. Robespierre sought to repair the blunder of Merlin, and proposed to decree that "no nation should have the right to give itself a king"; and when a laugh put this down, he moved the instant condemnation and execution of Louis by virtue of an insurrection.

At length, on the 11th of December, Louis was dragged to the bar of the convention. His calm dignity silenced the noisy galleries, excited the pity of the Girondists, and even shook many of the Jacobins in their cruel resolves. Once only he made use of a tone approaching to indignation; it was when he repelled the charge of spilling the blood of his subjects on the 10th of August. A new debate arose as to whether he should be allowed defenders: they were not conceded without a struggle. Louis selected Target and Tronchet: the former declined the dangerous office, which Lamoignon de Malesherbes proffered himself to undertake. The meeting betwixt this venerable man and the fallen prince, whose minister he had been in the old days of the monarchy, was touching in the extreme: Malesherbes fell at the feet of his royal master; words could not express the feelings of either.

Louis was allowed until the 26th to prepare his defence: the interval was spent in skirmishes betwixt the parties. Louvet proposed the banishment of the Bourbon race, aiming at Orleans. The leading Jacobins defended the prince who fraternised with them, denounced Brissot and Louvet, and demanded the exile of Roland. On the appointed day Louis appeared once more before the convention, attended by his defenders. The young Desèze, who had been added to their number, pronounced the monarch's defence. It was of considerable length, and elaborately drawn up, but wanted dignity, in appealing more to the compassion than to the justice of the assembly. Desèze thus concluded: "Frenchmen! the Revolution, which regenerated you, has developed great virtues; beware, lest it obliterate from your minds the sentiment of humanity, without which all others are false.

"Let me anticipate here the language of history. Louis ascended the throne at the age of twenty, and even thus young, gave in his high station an example of the purest morals. He showed then no guilty weakness nor

corrupt passion: he was economical, just, severe, the constant friend of his people. Did they demand the abolition of an enormous tax?—he abolished it. Did they complain of the remains of servitude?—he did away with its last vestiges in his domains. Complaints were made of the criminal legislation; they were met by reform. Thousands of French, previously deprived of the rights and privileges of citizens, recovered those rights by the laws of Louis. The people demanded liberty; he granted the boon. He anticipated their demands; he sacrificed all to them: and yet it is in the name of this people that some this day stand forth to demand—Citizens, I cannot go on, I leave the task to history. Reflect that history will pass judgment upon your sentence, and that hers will be also that of eternity!"

No sooner had Louis withdrawn, than the furious and contending passions of the assembly burst forth. Lanjuinais, unable to contain his emotion, rushed to the tribune, and made the wild demand that the whole process should be annulled. His voice was drowned with the cry of "Traitor!" Debate on this day was impossible. On the next, the Gironde declared its opinion by the mouth of Salles: he proposed to decree Louis guilty, but to leave the punishment to be fixed by the people in their primary assemblies. Salles drew a picture of the consequences of the king's execution—the hatred of foreign nations, the depreciation of liberty and the abhorrence of its name excited amongst them; at home the probable elevation of a revolutionary chief, "whom the very emigrants would return to support, and become his valets, provided he avenged them by the destruction of liberty, and rewarded them by a restoration of their titles." The too faithful prophecy passed unhearkened to.

Robespierre was the principal orator of the extreme opinion: he stigmatised the proposal of appealing to the people as an excitement to civil war; indulged in a warm panegyric of minorities; and, as the spokesman of one, demanded the immediate execution of Louis. Vergniaud replied with that matchless eloquence, those powers of logic and persuasion, before which the cant and casuistry of the Jacobins shrank away. He defended the proposal of an appeal to the people, and denied that civil war or discord could spring from it; he deprecated the execution of Louis, and followed Salles, in depicting its consequences, in a higher, a truer, and still more prophetic tone. The effects of a war against Europe he described as if a vision had placed the subsequent twenty years before his eyes.

"I do not presage defeat," said he, "in case of war; but even by the natural concourse of the most prosperous events, the country must be consumed by her efforts. The population will be devoured by the ravages of war; not a family but must lament a son or a father. Agriculture will want arms, manufacture hands. Your treasures will flow in imposts: the social system, wearied with shocks, will fall under the influence of a mortal languor. Beware, lest in the midst of her triumphs France should come to resemble those famed Egyptian monuments that have subdued time. The passing stranger is astounded by their grandeur; but, if he penetrate within them, what doth he find?—lifeless ashes, and the silence of the tomb!"

Vergniaud's warning to the convention is still more prophetic. "When Cromwell sought to prepare the dissolution of that parliament by the aid of which he had upset the throne and sent Charles to the scaffold, he brought forward insidious propositions, which he knew would disgust the nation, but which he supported by hired applause and clamour. The parliament yielded; the fermentation became general; and Cromwell broke, without effort, that parliament which he had used as the footstool to climb to power.

"Have you not heard in these very precincts men crying out with fury, 'If bread be dear, the cause is in the Temple; if money be scarce, if the armies in want, the cause is in the Temple.' The cause of all ill, in short, is in the Temple. Yet those who uttered this know right well that the dearness of bread, the want of money, or the bad state of the armies, had nought whatever to do with the Temple. What then was their object? And who will guarantee to me that these same men, who are continually striving to degrade the convention,—these same men, who proclaim everywhere that a new revolution is necessary, that the sections ought to rise in permanent insurrection; who harangue in the municipality that when the convention succeeded to Louis there was but a change of tyrants; who clamour for another 10th of August; who speak but of plots, death, treasons, and proscription, who argue the necessity of a defender, of a dictator,—who will guarantee to me that these same men, as soon as Louis is sent from the Temple to the scaffold, will not resume their cry, and changing but one word, repeat, 'If bread is dear, the cause is in the convention; if money be scarce, and the armies unprovided, the cause is in the convention,'" etc.

This warning, the solemnity of which is to us increased by a knowledge of its speedy fulfilment, had not its due effect. Barrère, as usual, got up to state or lead the sentiments of the Plain; he thought the plan of the Gironde dangerous; and the convention agreed with him. An appeal to the people as to the fate of Louis was rejected by a great majority.

The final question of the sentence was put on the evening of the 16th of January. Each member was called to the tribune to give his vote aloud, in presence of the applause or execration of the galleries. Of the party of the Mountain the universal vote was, of course, death; still, that of Égalité, duke of Orleans, as he pronounced the fatal word against his relation and sovereign, jarred upon the feelings even of that hardened assembly. Of the Gironde, many voted simply for death, in fear and despair, it should seem: twenty-six of their number, amongst whom was Vergniaud, voted for death with reprieve or delay of execution. How deeply must they have rued that vote on hearing the result of the scrutiny! The number present was 721. The bare majority was thus 361; and but 361 voices were for death without condition. But Vergniaud and his friends had declared their vote independent of their condition, which was but a vow and recommendation; and by this means their faintheartedness raised the majority to 387 against 334 voices, which were for imprisonment during war, and exile after peace. In vain the Girondists endeavoured to amend their weakness by again agitating the question of reprieve: the hour of useful resolve was passed.

The motions for reprieval and delay were negatived, and, on the 20th, all efforts to save Louis were abandoned. Kersaint, an old sailor, resigned his seat in the assembly, refusing to herd longer with regicides. The capital was in the utmost agitation; the commune had taken every precaution to spread terror, and render the expression of pity dangerous. The middle orders commiserated, indeed, the fate of their sovereign, but knew not how to save him. The few royalists could but gnash their teeth in the powerlessness of despair. One, a *garde du corps*, resolved to have at least his mite of vengeance; he sought out one conventionalist that had voted for the death of Louis: Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau was pointed out to him dining in a tavern, and the guard instantly buried his sword in the bosom of the regicide.

Meantime the executive council, with Garat, minister of justice, at its head, repaired, in the afternoon of the 20th, to communicate to Louis his condemnation. The monarch heard it without emotion, except a smile of

indignation at one word, that which accused him of conspiracy. He was prepared; and taking the decree of condemnation from the secretary, he handed in return to that personage a written paper, asking, amongst a few other requests, three days to prepare for death, and a confessor of his choice.[1] The convention, as soon as consulted, refused the delay, but gave orders that a confessor should be admitted to the Temple. The abbé Edgeworth, being selected by the king, accordingly repaired to him. At seven in the evening his family was allowed to visit him, but not in private. His guardians insisted on witnessing, through a glass door, this most melancholy of domestic interviews. It lasted nearly two hours. Louis spoke the greater part of the time, related the circumstances of his trial, and endeavoured to soothe the distracted queen and princesses.[2] They found utterance but in the convulsive sobs of anguish. In parting, he promised to see them early on the morrow. But no sooner had they gone than he observed, "I cannot." He resolved to spare both them and himself this further trial. He was engaged until midnight with his confessor. He then went to bed, and slept soundly until five; when he arose, heard mass in his chamber, and received the sacrament, the guards affording the means of performing these ceremonies with the greatest difficulty. Neither would they allow him a knife for his last repast, nor scissors to cut off his locks and bare his neck for execution. "The executioner is a valet good enough for him," was the observation.[b]

THE EXECUTION OF LOUIS XVI

Throughout his last ordeals, the king revealed a wonderful steadfastness in resignation and a moral courage of the highest order. Had he shown the same bravery previously, the cause of popular liberty might have been long delayed or perhaps more peaceably achieved. As it was, his behaviour deserved the words of "kingly" and "Christian" in their poetical, but alas, not their practical and historical significance. The very beauty of his soul in its last hours has thrown a light of horror on the whole cause of liberty reached by the destruction of kings, and has led many to forget how untypical of monarchy his character was, and what multitudes of lowly heroes have met martyrdom at the hands of merciless royalty with equal courage. But this again is said only as a counterweight in favour of a judicial attitude and in no sense as a diminution of the sweet and gentle glory of one who bravely paid a penalty he had not earned, but had inherited from generations of vicious ancestors. The king's farewell to his friends was not the least beautiful of his many beautiful deeds.[a]

[1 He recommended to the nation's benevolence the persons who had been attached to his person or to his house, he expressed the wish that the convention would immediately take into consideration the care of his family and allow them to retire freely where they judged fit. He demanded: (1) a delay of three days in order to prepare to appear before God; (2) permission to see his family without witnesses during that interval; (3) the power to call in a priest of his own choice. Lastly he asked to be delivered from the constant supervision which the commune had established over him for some days. At the suggestion of Cambacérès, the following resolution was passed: "The convention authorises the provisional executive council: (1) to satisfy Louis' requests, except concerning the delay, in which respect it passes to the order of the day; (2) to answer Louis that the French nation, great in its benevolence as it is strict in its justice, will take charge of his family and procure them a suitable destiny." That destiny was to be the scaffold for the wife and sister, Simon's lessons for the son, and a harsh captivity for the daughter of the condemned man: but at least, at this moment the assembly deigned to allow a priest, freely chosen by Louis, to soften the last moments of the unfortunate king. This was Madame Elizabeth's confessor, who had remained in Paris braving all the rigour of the laws against unsworn priests. — TERNAUX.[b]]

[2 After relating his lawsuit and speaking with the greatest generosity of those who had condemned him, the king made his son swear not to avenge his death. — TERNAUX.[b]]

[1793 A.D.]

When Malesherbes, his former minister, fell at his master's feet, and by his sobs informed him of the fatal news, the king, always calm and dignified, raised him, held him affectionately in his arms, and said in a gentle voice, "Ah, my dear Malesherbes, do not envy me the only refuge left me. I am ready to sacrifice myself for my people; may my blood save them from the evils which I fear for them." "Sire, many faithful subjects have sworn to rescue your majesty from the hands of the executioners or to die with you." "Thank them for their zeal; but tell them that I should not forgive them if a drop of blood were shed for me: I did not allow it to be shed when, perhaps, it might have preserved my throne and my life. I do not regret it." Then the king embraced his defenders and made them promise to return. But he was never to see them again; the door of the Temple had closed forever behind them.

On the day of his execution, January 21st, 1793, Paris had the appearance of a vast sepulchre. The streets were deserted, the armed citizens filled the posts which had been assigned them and were not allowed to leave them on any pretext. The rest of the citizens had orders not to leave their houses.

The windows were shut, doors closed. The weather was dark and foggy; since the previous day a shroud of snow was stretched over all the town; but the rain which had fallen in the night had already made part of it disappear.

It was eight o'clock. The king expressed a wish to see his family again, as he had promised them on the previous day; but the abbé Edgeworth begged him not to allow the queen and her children such a painful ordeal. Louis submitted to this suggestion and asked that Cléry might be allowed to cut his hair; he did not wish to be touched by the hand of the executioner. But suspicion was so strong, pity so crushed in the hearts of all those who surrounded him, that this request, whose motive was so easy to understand, was brutally refused him.

Santerre appeared, followed by Claude Bernard and Jacques Roux, whom the commune had fixed upon to conduct the condemned man to the scaffold. The commissaries on guard and some of the armed police of the escort accompanied them. Louis XVI, who had heard, though without showing the slightest emotion, the entrance door open noisily, came out of his oratory where he had shut himself in with his confessor, and asked Santerre if it was now the hour. "Yes," laconically answered the commander-in-chief of the armed force. "I am busy; wait for me," replied the king with authority.

The only thought which occupied the king at this moment was his eternal salvation. He quietly went back to the turret, knelt before the minister of God, and received his blessing. Soon, returning to his room, he advanced to Santerre and those who accompanied him. "Is there a member of the commune among you?" Jacques Roux advanced, the king held out a sealed paper towards him; "I request you to place this writing in the hands of the president of the general council." "I can take charge of no packet, it is not my business; I have come to conduct you to the scaffold." The king then turned to one of the commissioners on service in the Temple, Baudrais; he at least did not refuse to carry out the last wish of a man who was about to die. Perceiving that all those who surrounded him wore their hats, Louis XVI put his on, and pointing out the faithful Cléry to the municipal guards, "I should like him to be left in the Temple," he said, "in the service of the queen — of my wife," he corrected himself. No one answered. The king advanced to Santerre; "Let us start!" he said.

[1793 A.D.]

Immediately the armed police who were in the room went out, and Santerre after them; the king and Abbé Edgeworth followed; the municipal officers closed the march, Cléry remained alone. The king crossed the first courtyard with a firm step. After casting on the tower a look of tenderness and regret for those whom he was leaving, he stepped into the carriage which was to take him to the place of his martyrdom. His confessor took the seat by his side, two armed police were on the front seats of the carriage. He was preceded by Santerre, and on each side of him was one of the two municipal officers, Jacques Roux and Claude Bernard.

The gloomy procession set out; the journey from the Temple to the place de la Révolution lasted an hour: it was disturbed by no serious attempt to release the prisoner. Abbé Edgeworth gave the king the breviary which he was carrying and pointed out the prayers for the dying. The king recited them in a low voice; not a word passed between Louis XVI and his two warders during the whole of the painful journey. Two o'clock struck. The procession arrived at the end of the rue Royale. The carriage in which Louis XVI was seated turned to the right and went to the scaffold raised between the entrance of the Champs Élysées and the pedestal which, after having served as the base of the statue of Louis XV, was now supporting that of Liberty. Louis XVI was completely absorbed in his reading; he only perceived that they had arrived when the carriage stopped. He raised his eyes, then went on reading the psalm which he had begun. Sanson's assistants opened the door, and lowered the step; but the king quietly ended his last prayer; then he closed the book, gave it back to Abbé Edgeworth, charged the armed police to attend to the safety of the courageous priest, and stepped out of the carriage.

The executioners wished to seize him; he resisted them, and took off his coat and cravat, knelt down at the feet of God's minister, and received the last blessing. He then rose and walked towards the stairs which led to the scaffold. The assistants stopped him, and tried to seize his hands. "What do you want to do?" asked Louis XVI. "To bind you." "To bind me! I will never allow it! It is not necessary. I am sure of myself." A violent scene might have ensued: "Sire, offer this last sacrifice," said Abbé Edgeworth, "it is another feature of resemblance between your majesty and the God who will be your reward." Louis submitted and held out his hands to the executioners. They tied them with a handkerchief, then they cut his hair; the preparations were ended. Louis resolutely climbed the few steps which separated him from the platform. Advancing to the edge of the scaffold, his head turned towards the palace of his ancestors, he made an imperious gesture to the drummers who had not ceased beating since the carriage arrived in the square. These men, dominated in spite of themselves by a twofold sentiment of respect and pity, were immediately silent. "Frenchmen," cried Louis, "I am innocent, I forgive the authors of my death: I pray God that France may never suffer for the blood which is about to be shed; and you, unfortunate people——"

At this moment an officer on horseback, sword in hand, galloped up to the drummers and ordered them to beat. The executioners seized the victim and thrust him under the fatal knife. The head fell, one of Sanson's assistants picked it up and showed it to the people.

Cries of "Long live the Nation! Long live the Republic!" burst forth and swelled in sound to the outer edge of the square; some rushed toward the scaffold to enjoy at closer range the horrible spectacle. [It is often stated that the abbé Edgeworth exclaimed as the king perished, "Son of St. Louis,

ascend to heaven," but Lord Holland *m* asked the abbé himself, and he denied the poetic outburst, which really belongs to the journalist Charles His.] The crowd, which had been unable to approach beyond the trenches, dispersed silently. The witnesses of the execution went to carry to every quarter of Paris the news that the last king of the French had just died by the sword of the law, and that the republic was founded in France forever. *h*

At home this Killing of a King has divided all friends; and abroad it has united all enemies. Fraternity of Peoples, Revolutionary Propagandism;[1] Atheism, Regicide; total destruction of social order in this world! All Kings, and lovers of Kings, and haters of Anarchy, rank in coalition; as in a war for life. England signifies to Citizen Chauvelin, the Ambassador or rather Ambassador's-Cloak, that he must quit the country in eight days. Ambassador's-Cloak and Ambassador, Chauvelin and Talleyrand, depart accordingly. Talleyrand, implicated in that Iron Press of the Tuileries, thinks it safest to make for America.

England has cast out the Embassy: England declares war,—being shocked principally, it would seem, at the condition of the River Schelde. Spain declares war; being shocked principally at some other thing; which doubtless the Manifesto indicates.[2] Nay we find it was not England that declared war first, or Spain first; but that France herself declared war first on both of them;[3]—a point of immense Parliamentary and Journalistic interest in those days, but which has become of no interest whatever in these. They all declare war. The sword is drawn, the scabbard thrown away. It is even as Danton said, in one of his all too gigantic figures: "The coalised Kings threaten us; we hurl at their feet, as gage of battle, the Head of a King." *f*

[1 On the motion of Danton, the convention had decreed (November 19th, 1792) that France "accorded aid and fraternity to all peoples that wished to seek liberty." *f*]
[2 March 23rd.]
[3 February 1st; and March 7th.]

CHAPTER X

THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

[1793 A.D.]

THE French Revolution is apt to present itself to the eye as a hideous spectre. We behold and tremble. We are appalled by its monstrous aspect, and too deeply stricken with horror to regard it fixedly, with scrutiny and patience. Could we but do so, the phantom would lose much of its shadowy character; and although nought can wash away its crimes and blood, it would at least appear but an earthly and human phenomenon, the nature and causes of which we might perceive and store up as the precious materials of wisdom.

Hitherto, however, the Revolution has been treated as the spectre, and considered beyond the pale of humanity. The imagination alone has seized upon its prominent horrors. Even those who have deigned to seek for a cause have found it in some collateral or subordinate circumstance. Philosophy in the opinion of some, the duke of Orleans or Pitt in that of others, prepared and brought about the great catastrophe; whilst others again are satisfied to cast the entire blame on the fickleness and cruelty of man born upon the French soil. Scarcely has a distinction been made betwixt the Revolution and its excesses. Freedom itself has been included in the general stigma, and made answerable for that mass of guilt and folly which its enemies were mainly influential in producing.

The most fatal circumstance of the epoch was foreign interference, fatal alike in the hopes and the fears which it occasioned. Reliance on foreign support caused the emigration of the noblesse, as well as the temporising and at intervals the insincere policy of the unfortunate Louis XVI. Had king and aristocracy been obliged to confine their views to France, they would either have submitted frankly from the first, in which case power could never have descended lower than the ranks and opinions of the constitutionalists; or they would have stood forth in open and civil war, an alternative preferable to flight, conspiracy, and massacre. The monarch, obedient to the moderation of his character, pursued an uncertain career, a kind of medium between the extremes by which he excited irritation and popular hatred, and compelled the successive parties, which in the assembly advocated the cause of freedom, to call in the popular force, first to their support, and then to their mastery.

Of the evils which so often attend revolution, the overthrow of all government and annihilation of all law are not the worst; it destroys, likewise, those finer and unseen ligaments which hold society together. Honour, a certain measure of good-will towards our fellows, with confidence in its reciprocity; certain bounds put to the desires of ambition, self-interest and enthusiasm, by that general feeling which can force itself to be respected by censure or ridicule; the general influence of domestic or amicable ties — all these various motives and persuasives, that secure the peace and well-being of society more than codes, are completely lost sight of in the effervescence of a revolution. Man, by that shock, is thrown back into a state of nature. He must go armed in mistrust at least, find no friend except in the ally who fights side by side with him in the mortal combat; he must neither expect mercy, nor be weak enough to show it. The French Revolution in its present advanced state offers this picture exactly; or rather, that of an arena of wild beasts struggling for mastery, knowing no safety but in complete victory, and not even in that victory, unless it be sealed by the blood of the vanquished.

The Girondists had the misfortune of not understanding the position in which they were placed. At first masters, they stood by like lions in the magnanimity of strength, and not unlike the king of the forest in character. A little violence and blood had satisfied their appetites; nor were they prepared, like the Jacobin tigers, to destroy for mere destruction's sake. Their forbearance, however, proved but weakness; and they soon found that, having failed to crush, they must inevitably themselves be crushed.

After the execution of Louis the discord thickened. Such beings as Marat, Robespierre, and Danton could not exist save in the fearful atmosphere of sedition that they had created for themselves. Indeed their personal security demanded this; for a return to order such as the Girondists sought to establish would inevitably bring them to punishment for their crimes. Already the Gironde had succeeded in proving them to be implicated in the horrors of September, and a judgment was about to be passed on several of the inferior leaders, when the Mountain persuaded the convention to quash the proceedings.

In partial exculpation of Robespierre and the Jacobins, however (if the word exculpation can be applied to such men), it must be allowed that at this epoch an insurrectionary spirit broke out in the capital independent of their intrigues. Its cause lay in the general distress, in the dearness of bread and of all necessaries, aggravated by the recent declaration of war against England and Holland. A revolution such as the present, which had swept the rich from the face of the land, and converted even the moderately wealthy into trembling misers, necessarily threw all the population hitherto dependent on the expenses of these classes into indigence. Up to this moment the commune had paid them the produce of its plunders as the price of insurrection. This fund was now exhausted. Universal war made such a large demand that the commune could no longer obtain funds from the convention, somewhat jealous of it, whilst the depreciation of assignats or republican paper rendered aid illusory, and left the people utterly without the means of procuring even bread. They were numerous and armed. They crowded to the convention, and demanded that corn should nowhere be sold for more than twenty-five livres the sack, under penalty to the vendor of being sent to the galleys. Marat himself exclaimed in the convention against the maximum, as this measure was called. Robespierre made similar efforts in the Jacobins.

Danton alone held back, and still kept his club of Cordeliers true to the prevailing spirit of the populace. His brother anarchists soon acknowledged his wisdom, and shuffled round once more to head the popular cry. Marat in some ten days after, having opposed the maximum, recommended the mob in his journal to pillage a few magazines, and hang the monopolisers. He was accused of this by the Gironde, and new tumults arose in the assembly. The Parisian populace adopted the advice of Marat. After the dearness of bread, that of sugar, candles, and such necessaries was most felt since the war with England. Crowds of women accordingly proceeded to the grocers' shops, demanded these articles at the old prices, and soon at no price at all. A scene of plunder ensued, which was at length put a stop to by the federals of Brest, and some national guards.

When each difficulty of these dreadful times approached its crisis, evil tidings from the armies were wont to arrive, superadd a panic fear to all the evil passions of the hour, and thus precipitate the catastrophe. Now came the news of reverses in Belgium, the advance of the Austrians, their having defeated the French near Aachen, the utter failure of Dumouriez's invasion of Holland, and dire suspicions at the same time of the fidelity of that general. His conduct gave full scope for this. He openly spoke in contempt of the convention, and insulted its emissaries, who, he observed with truth, had spoiled his conquest by anarchy and spoliation.[b]

THE FALL OF THE GIRONDISTS (JUNE, 1793)

In the provinces of the west, where the influence of the two orders whose privileges the Revolution had destroyed reigned without a rival, the agitation had begun very early. By degrees it attained Maine, Anjou, and Brittany where the insurgents were designated under the name of Chouans.[1] As early as October, 1791, it had been found necessary to send troops against them. But the Vendean peasants did not begin the civil war in the name of throne and altar until after the king's death and when the convention had decreed, in March, 1793, a levy of 300,000 men. At the same time that this danger manifested itself in the interior, reverses began abroad. The English had fallen upon the French colonies and had seized Tobago and Pondicherry. Dumouriez, defeated at Neerwinden after an abortive invasion of Holland, evacuated Belgium and declared against the convention. His soldiers refused to follow him and he found himself obliged to flee to the Austrian camp (April 3rd). None the less the republic had lost its best general. He was the second to abandon his troops, La Fayette having preceded him. Already almost all the noble officers had emigrated. The soldiers' first distrust of their leaders returned; the army once more became disorganised and the northern frontier was endangered.

The convention made head in all directions. Against internal enemies a committee of the General Security was created for the purpose of seeking out not only culprits but suspects, and a revolutionary tribunal was erected to punish them. A committee of the Public Safety, a kind of dictatorship of nine persons, exercised the public authority in sovereign fashion, in order to bring the most energetic activity to bear on the question of national defence (April 6th); and, for fear lest the inviolability of the members of the assembly should hamper this new judicial power, the convention

[1] The Chouans were so-called from their leader Jean Cottereau, called the Chouan or Chat-Huant (screech-owl), who had been a smuggler and had adopted the cry of the screech-owl as a rallying-cry.

renounced that privilege. Since Dumouriez's defection suspicion was everywhere: Robespierre firmly believed that the Girondins wished to dismember France and open it to the foreigners; the Girondins, that Marat, Robespierre, and Danton wished to make the duke of Orleans king, then assassinate him and found a triumvirate from which Danton would have hurled his two colleagues that he might reign alone. Each in good faith attributed absurd designs to his adversaries. Hence all this distrust, fear, that terrible counsellor, and the axe suspended and falling on all heads.

The decree which did away with the inviolability of the deputies was soon put in execution. Since the king's trial the Girondins and the Mountainists had been carrying on a fierce contest in the convention: the first desiring to arrest the Revolution, the others to precipitate its course, though it should advance henceforth only through tracks of blood. The most atrocious of the fanatics was Marat, who reasoned thus: the public safety is the supreme law; now 270,000 nobles and priests with their partisans are endangering the state, therefore these 270,000 heads must fall; and every morning he demanded them. Carrying the cynicism of his thought into his costume he came to take his seat in the convention in sabots, the red cap on his head and dressed in the carmagnole. The Girondins, whom he accused of the crime of moderantism, attacked him. They obtained his accusation and succeeded in having him brought before the revolutionary tribunal. That tribunal which judged without appeal, and punished with death for a word, for a regret, for the mere name a man bore, dismissed Marat, acquitted. The populace conducted him back to the convention in triumph.

This ill-managed business was a double imprudence on the part of the Girondins: the check they received showed their weakness, and by destroying the inviolability of the deputies they gave their enemies a weapon against themselves. An attack on Robespierre succeeded no better and alienated Danton, who contended against them on the 31st of May, and in particular on the 2nd of June, 1793. The Mountain, mistress, through the commune and the Jacobins, of the Paris sections, armed them against the convention. Surrounded, terrified, the latter, under pressure of the revolt, signed the order for the arrest of thirty-one Girondins. Some, like Vergniaud and Gensonné, waited to stand their trial; others, like Pétion and Barbaroux, escaping from their persecutors, endeavoured to rouse the departments.[c]

REACTION OF THE PROVINCES

Robespierre was an extraordinary personage. He was the very perfection, the type of triumphant mediocrity. Talents he had none — nor ideas, although by dint of exertion he acquired the semblance of the one, and purloined the others notoriously from all around him. His speeches were written for him; and the debates of the Jacobin clubs, at first philosophical and given to the discussion of principles, supplied him with a political vocabulary at least. Thus his friends, his future enemies being included in that class, lent to this hawk the feathers that imped his wing, and taught him at length to soar. He was totally without passion, unless vanity deserve the name; but his vanity was wise, and wore all the loftiness of pride. Then he had honesty and consistency, two qualities that cannot be denied him, however he might have adopted them in calculation. From his first vote in the constituent assembly he had been the rank democrat that he ever was, professing all those extreme opinions to which others tended. His private morals were

irreproachable. He held to his condition, lodged to the last with the same humble carpenter's family that at first housed him.

Unlike his colleague Danton, no bribe, no peculation, no expense, no licentiousness, considered as such in that day at least, could be laid to his charge. No petty ambition distracted his views, or blemished his character for disinterestedness. He was never minister, nor even commissary. After the fall of the Gironde, when he was all-powerful, he did not become member of the sovereign committee till it pleased the convention and the Jacobins of their own accord to appoint him. With this there was no affectation in his *sans-culottism*. He neither shaved his head, nor wore tattered garments, nor mounted the red nightcap. Robespierre alone wore powder, and preserved the dress and demeanour of respectability. Political courage he certainly did not want, though physically he was, with Marat, the most arrant of cowards. Ruthless as a tiger, at first reckless, then greedy of blood — such was the tyrant of the day.

The Gironde had now fallen before the party of Robespierre and the Parisians. The dignity of the national assembly had been violated, and its freedom destroyed. It remained for the provinces to fulfil their menaces, support and avenge the Girondists, and resist the tumultuous tyranny of the capital. To this resistance many were previously disposed and partially prepared. The escape of some of the proscribed deputies, and their appearance in the provinces, communicated enthusiasm and gave leaders to the revolt, that now became general. The northern departments, with those immediately around Paris, alone remained true to the convention. The former, menaced by the foreign enemy, and occupied by the republican armies, had neither power nor leisure to rise. But Normandy, whither most of the fugitive Gironde had bent their steps, at once declared against the anarchists. The province summoned a representative assembly to meet at Caen, raised an army, appointed General Wimpfen to the command, and pushed forward its advanced post to Évreux, within a day's journey of the capital. Brittany strove to imitate La Vendée; whilst the victorious insurgents of this region were at this moment marching upon Nantes, in order to procure themselves a stronghold and a seaport. Nantes, though Girondist, prepared to resist the royalists to the last; and, in the middle of June, a gallant and general attack upon the town by the Vendeans was repulsed. Both parties were, however, equally hostile to the convention. Continuing the circuit of France, Bordeaux was naturally indignant at the arrest of its deputies. It instantly despatched a remonstrance to Paris, and began to levy an army to support it. Toulouse followed the example. Marseilles, the hyper-revolutionary Marseilles, had anticipated the crisis. The Jacobins and moderate republicans had come to blows, and the former had succumbed. Lyons presented the same scene, save that the struggle was more fierce. Lyons from its manufacture of silk, gold, and silver embroidery, and other articles of high luxury, had depended on the rich. It therefore contained an aristocratic and royalist party, which naturally generated the other extreme, a Jacobin club; and this club had its Marat in Chalier. The parties fought; the Jacobins were beaten, their club was destroyed; and Chalier, after a time, was tried and executed.

Thus did the exaggerated mutual reproaches of the Mountain and the Gironde realise each other. Robespierre, accused of aspiring to the dictatorship, became marked as fit for this supremacy, and attained it. The moderates, accused of aiming at feudalism, and projecting to organise the provinces separately and independently of the capital, were driven at length to attempt

this in their own defence as well as in that of freedom. Divided and declared as parties now were, it seemed almost inevitable that the Jacobins would be crushed. More than two-thirds of the provinces declared against them, whilst the English and Austrians pressed them from the north and east. The Mountainists were, however, the central power, holding immediately in hand the army, the revenue, the administration. On the standard which they held up were all the old symbols of the Revolution; whilst the provincials, separated widely in space, and as widely in ideas, were under the impossibility of concerting either a plan of campaign, or a principle of resistance.

In many places the resistance gradually threw off the republican mask, and became avowed royalism. This terrified and disgusted others, however ill disposed to the convention, from taking part against it. But the chief cause of the failure of the provincial reaction in favour of the Gironde against Paris was that the Girondists were essentially a bourgeois party, supported by the middle classes only; that is by the townsmen of the provinces. The peasant population could never be made to comprehend a medium betwixt the royalist and the ultra-revolutionist; and thus when they refused to assume the white cockade, they equally refused to take arms against the tricolour. This state of things the convention, however, at first alarmed, in time was able to perceive. On the first rumour of the widespread resistance, proposals were entertained of conciliating the provinces, of sending them hostages from the bosom of the assembly itself. A new constitution was prepared, discussed in preference to measures of defence, which nevertheless appeared more pressing, and the convention seemed ready to deprecate the odium of France by dissolving itself. But with a clearer view courage returned; and Jean Bon Saint-André, in the name of the committee of public safety, pronounced that "the counter-revolution was confined to some few opulent towns," and that "the present was a war of merely some few shopkeepers against the liberty of the country."

In fact La Vendée alone fought, and at this time with ill success. The league of Lower Normandy, formidable by the debates and votes and *procès verbals* of its representative assembly, conducted its military efforts with all the irresolution and neglect characteristic of the Gironde. The only expedition which it attempted was against the town of Vernon. The first cannon-shot fired by the conventionalist gendarmes routed the hesitating army of the federals. They retreated. The Girondist deputies fled through Brittany to Bordeaux; and Normandy submitted to the sovereign authorities of Paris.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY KILLS MARAT (JULY 13TH, 1793)

A young Norman girl showed more heroism than the united party. Well-born, and inheriting competence, she became, like Madame Roland and many talented females of the time, deeply interested in political events. She came to worship with enthusiasm the idea of a republic, such as that which illustrated the ancient world, in which patriotism inspired the mass, in which virtues and genius were the undisputed titles to influence and power. This halcyon political state she saw in the predominance of the Gironde; and she was enamoured of the philosophy, the eloquence, the varied talents of its leaders. Mortified and indignant at their fall, Charlotte Corday made personal acquaintance with her admired statesmen, then fugitives at Caen; and her feelings inspired her with heroic resolve. Imparting her purposes to none she set out alone to Paris, and spent some days in seeking the abodes

and learning the motions of the sanguinary triumvirate. She determined to immolate one of them.

Marat appeared to her to be the most guilty and most atrocious. But he no longer went abroad to the convention, suffering under a continued fever, which he allayed by frequent baths, and indulged by denunciations and proscriptions, sent forth either in his daily journal or in letters to the convention. He was then clamorous, like a hound for his meal delayed, that Custine and Biron, the two generals in command, were aristocrats worthy of condemnation and the guillotine. Charlotte Corday went to the abode of the monster; a female with whom he lived denied her entrance: she insisted, saying she had matters of importance to communicate, having just arrived from Caen.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY (1768–1793)

Marat, who was extended in his bath in an adjoining chamber, caught the word, cried out that the young girl should be admitted, and eagerly commenced inquiries relating to the Girondist deputies then at Caen. He carefully noted down her replies, muttering, "They shall all go to the guillotine," when Charlotte Corday approached and plunged a knife into his breast. His cry for help brought his mistress; and she, a crowd. The monster had expired, the words of blood still in his mouth. Charlotte Corday stood by unmoved, in the calm serenity of heroism, avowing and glorying in the deed. Such was her countenance at her trial: such did it continue at her execution, which took place in a few days after, amidst the execrations of the mob.[b]

LAMARTINE ON CHARLOTTE CORDAY'S EXECUTION

The sky cleared up, and the rain, which wetted her to the skin, displayed the exquisite symmetry of her form, like a woman leaving the bath. Her hands bound behind her back obliged her to hold up her head, and this forced rigidity of the muscles gave more fixity to her attitude, and set off the outlines of her figure. The rays of the setting sun fell on her head; and her complexion, heightened by the red chemise, seemed of an unearthly brilliancy. Robespierre, Danton, and Camille Desmoulins had placed themselves on her passage, to gaze on her; for all those who anticipated assassination were curious to study in her features the expression of that fanaticism which might threaten them on the morrow. She resembled celestial vengeance appeased and transfigured, and from time to time she seemed to seek a glance of intelligence on which her eye could rest. Adam Lux, a young German republican, awaited the cart at the entrance of the rue St. Honoré,

and followed it to the foot of the scaffold. "He engraved in his heart," to quote his own words, "this unutterable sweetness amidst the barbarous outcries of the crowd; that look so gentle, yet penetrating; these vivid flashes that broke forth like burning ideas from these bright eyes, in which spoke a soul as intrepid as tender — charming eyes, which should have melted a stone."

Thus an enthusiastic and unearthly attachment accompanied her, without her knowledge, to the very scaffold, and prepared to follow her, in hope of an eternal reunion. The cart stopped, and Charlotte, at the sight of the fatal instrument, turned pale, but, soon recovering herself, ascended the scaffold with as light and rapid a step as the long chemise and her pinioned arms permitted. When the executioner, to bare her neck, removed the handkerchief that covered her bosom, this insult to her modesty moved her more than her impending death; then, turning to the guillotine, she placed herself under the axe. The heavy blade fell, and her head rolled on the scaffold. One of the assistants, named Legros, took it in his hand and struck it on the cheek. It is said that a deep crimson suffusion overspread the face, as though dignity and modesty had for an instant lasted longer even than life.

Such was the death of Marat; such the death of Charlotte Corday. In the face of murder history dares not praise, and in the face of heroism dares not condemn her. The appreciation of such an act places us in the terrible alternative of blaming virtue or applauding assassination. Like the painter who, despairing of rendering the expression of a mingled sentiment, cast a veil over the face of the figure, we must leave this mystery to be debated in the abysses of the human heart. There are deeds of which men are no judges, and which mount, without appeal, direct to the tribunal of God. There are human actions so strange a mixture of weakness and strength, pure intent and culpable means, error and truth, murder and martyrdom, that we know not whether to term them crime or virtue. The culpable devotion of Charlotte Corday is amongst those acts which admiration and horror would leave eternally in doubt, did not morality reprove them. Had we to find for this sublime liberatrix of her country, and generous murderess of a tyrant, a name which should at once convey the enthusiasm of our feelings towards her and the severity of our judgment on her action, we would coin a phrase combining the extreme of admiration and horror, and term her the Angel of Assassination.[1]

A few days afterwards Adam Lux published the *Apology of Charlotte Corday*, and associated himself with her deed, in order to share her martyrdom. Arrested and sent to the Abbaye, he exclaimed, as he entered the prison, "I shall die, then, for her." He perished soon after, saluting, as the altar of liberty and love, the scaffold which the blood of his model had hallowed. The heroism of Charlotte was sung by the poet André Chénier, who was himself so soon to die for that common fatherland of all great souls — pure liberty. Vergniaud, on learning in his dungeon of the crime, trial, and

[1 All historians, no matter to what shade of opinion they may belong, have agreed in honouring the courage of Charlotte Corday and in deploring the use she made of it. Political assassination should always be branded, no matter how exalted the object, how despicable the victim, or how pure the motive and intention of the assassin. Nothing can absolve him who on his own authority constitutes himself judge and executioner. Posterity, which pronounces the impartial verdict, does not crown heroes indiscriminately.

At a distance of three centuries, two women roused themselves for the salvation of France. The same love of country inflamed their hearts, the same hatred of tyranny strengthened their arms; both were surrendered to the executioner. But one seized the warrior's sword, the other the assassin's knife. That explains why, through the ages of history, Joan of Arc is exalted to a martyr and a saint, whilst in the memory of Charlotte Corday a bloodstain extinguishes her glory forever.—TERNAUX.[1]]

CHARLOTTE CORDAY AND MARAT

(From the painting by Baudry)

death of Charlotte, exclaimed, "She destroys us, but she teaches us how to die."

The purest virtue is deceived in her aim when she borrows the hand and weapons of crime. The blood of Marat intoxicated the people. The Mountain, Robespierre, Danton, happy at being freed from a rival whose influence with the multitude they feared, cast his corpse to them, in order that they might erect it into an idol. The convention ordained the worship of Marat as a diversion to anarchy, and permitted a god to be made of him whom it had blushed to own as a colleague. The night after his death the people hung garlands at his door, and the convention inaugurated his bust in their hall. The sections appeared at the convention, to demand that he should be buried in the Panthéon. Others asked that his body should be embalmed, and carried through the departments to the very limits of the world. Some proposed that an empty tomb should be erected to him beneath every tree of liberty. Robespierre alone strove to moderate this idolatry of the Jacobins. "Doubtless," said he, "the honours of the poniard are reserved for me; priority has been established by chance, and my fall is near at hand."

The convention decreed that it would be present *en masse* at the funeral. The painter David arranged the obsequies, and strove to imitate those of Cæsar. He placed the body of Marat in the church of the Cordeliers, on a catafalque. The poniard, the bath, the block of wood, the inkstand, pens, and papers were displayed by his side, as the arms of the philosopher and the proofs of his stoical indigence. Deputations of the sections succeeded each other with harangues, incense, and flowers, and pronounced terrible vows over the corpse.

In the evening the funeral *cortège* went forth, lighted by the flambeau of the church, and did not reach the place of sepulture until midnight. The place selected for the reception of Marat's remains was the very one where he had so often harangued and agitated the people, the court of the club of Cordeliers, as we inter a warrior on his field of battle. The body was lowered into the grave under the shade of those trees whose leaves, illuminated by thousands of lamps, shed over his tomb the soft and serene light of ancient elysium. The people, under the banners of the sections, the departments, the electors, the commune, the Cordeliers, the Jacobins, and the convention, assisted at this ceremony. Derisive apotheosis! The president of the assembly, Thuriot, addressed the last national adieu to his shade. He announced that the convention would place the statue of Marat by the side of that of Brutus. The club of the Cordeliers claimed his heart. Enclosed in an urn, it was suspended from the roof of the hall of assembly. The society voted him also an altar. "Precious relics of a god!" exclaimed an orator at the foot of this altar, "shall we be perjured in presence of thy manes? Thou demandest vengeance of us, and thy assassins yet breathe!"

Pilgrimages of the people congregated every Sunday at the tomb of Marat, and mingled the heart of this apostle of murder in the same adoration as that of the Christ of peace. The theatres were decorated with his image. Places and streets changed their names for his. The mayor of Nîmes caused himself to be designated the Marat of the south; the mayor of Strasburg, the Marat of the Rhine. The *conventionnel* Carrier called his troops the army of Marat. The widow or mistress of "*l'ami du peuple*" demanded vengeance from the convention for her husband, and a tomb for herself. Young girls, dressed in white, and holding crowns of cypress and oak in

their hands, sang around the funeral car hymns to Marat. All the burden of these chants was sanguinary. The poniard of Charlotte Corday, in lieu of stanching blood, appeared to have opened the veins of France.[d]

ESTIMATES OF MARAT

Perhaps even for Marat a word of common justice should be spoken. The deeds he accomplished and the worse deeds he inspired are horrible enough without soiling reproach with slander. It is common to paint him as a monster of hideous filth and degradation, and his life in cellars and sewers when a price was on his head had indeed given him a skin-disease which the science of that day could not prevent from serious aggravation; but to-day's science would call it a harmless eruption, easily cured. It is common to speak of him with contempt as a veterinary surgeon — Carlyle[e] calls him a "horse-leech" — which is not true and would prove nothing if it were.

Marat's early life gave no prophecy of his end. He was born in 1743, in Switzerland, son of a successful physician, who sent him to travel and then to study medicine for two years at Bordeaux. He practised in Paris, later in Holland, and eventually in a fashionable district of London. A philosophical *Essay on Man*, published there in 1773, showed a remarkable command of the history of philosophy. This and other works brought him honorary membership in various learned societies. In 1775 Edinburgh University gave him as an honour the degree of M.D.

He was of such repute that the count of Artois, afterwards King Charles X of France, made him brevet physician to his guards, and he became a very successful physician to the aristocracy of France. Meanwhile he was gaining repute as a scientist, optics and electricity being his special fields. When the Académie des Sciences rejected him as a dissentient from Newton, whose *Optics* he translated into French, Goethe was indignant at the despotism. Marat was large enough for Voltaire to attack and for Franklin to befriend. His *Plan de Législation Criminelle* in 1780 was notably humane.

The rise of revolution found this distinguished man ripe for action. He began to publish his paper, *L'Ami du Peuple*. He seems to have felt an absolutely sincere abhorrence for all forms of autocracy. The woes of the common people had set his heart not aglow, but aflame. One who has read of the torments endured by the poorer classes of the old régime has surely seen that it gave some temptation to fanaticism and that a heart inclined to be revengeful would have impulse enough towards ferocity. Marat always attacked the one in power — municipal council, king, or Gironde. It was the municipal council under Bailly that sought to repress him. He fled to London in January, 1790, and again in December, 1791, returning to live a subterranean life. The manner in which he evaded whole corps of detectives and yet kept publishing his journal, has something of magic in it.

His very invisibleness gave him an uncanny hold on the popular mind, but when it was safe to appear in public he could face the whole convention coolly and answer denunciation with proud confession and counter-denunciation. He was most radical in his measures and believed in turning on the royalists the punishment they would speedily enough wreak on the republicans if they could return. He is accordingly blameworthy in part for the September massacres, though he previously strove to secure a tribunal to try the royalist prisoners legally.

Later Marat saw that the Gironde was interested in federalising France. He thought that this was to sacrifice Paris to the jealousy of other cities, to

rob the cause of centralisation, and to present dissension to the armies outside. His old associates, Robespierre and Danton, turned against him, and Marat, as we have seen, faced a tumult of abuse such as has rarely been endured. Instead of denying many of the charges, he turned them into boasts.

After this, the convention had declared the French Republic one and indivisible. "And this," says Bougeart,[f] an earnest, perhaps too earnest, defender of Marat, "is how this clashing of shields by the Girondins ended. The assembly understood that unity had saved France, that in unity alone lay her salvation, and by its voting showed faith in it. To whom did the country owe this declaration? To Marat alone."

Of his character, his contemporary, Fabre d'Églantine,[g] wrote: "But in this Marat, gentle-hearted, if we judge him by the spirit he showed, we have seen a strong-headed man, of invincible courage, of unshaken firmness. I have never seen him, even in the most violent storms, without rare presence of mind. In his designs, in their execution, in his opinions, in his patriotic hatred, nothing could make him deviate or bend. It was not obstinacy, for he knew how to recognise reason and how to praise it in another when it exceeded his own. And all this with so simple a manner that the yielding itself was a testimony to his superiority. In danger, in the most personal and spiteful attacks, in most violent persecution, his courage and intrepidity were worthy of admiration. No reverses depressed him, no consideration dominated him. A special proof is given of this in the manner with which he bore at the convention the terrible and combined attacks of all the aristocracy of France in the person of his enemies then present; in the striking victory he carried off alone; in the terror he inspired in their souls as he stood there with disdain on his lips and a pistol in his hand.

"He had more than mere good-heartedness. One of the bases of his character was that great modesty that engenders and nourishes in an honest man simplicity, love of truth, and good and noble sentiments. Nothing annoyed him more than impudence. The sight of effrontery united to dissimulation sometimes made him writhe with wrath, sometimes lent his attitude and discourse a strong dignity, a proud gravity under which his small stature disappeared. 'I would bid you be modest,' was his favourite phrase, and although he often had occasion to use it, yet he said it with such sincerity that it was strongly felt and never seemed hypocritical in his mouth."

A latter-day Englishman, H. Morse Stephens,[h] has also found it possible to say: "Whatever his political ideas, two things shine clearly out of the mass of prejudice which has shrouded the name of Marat — that he was a man of great attainments, and acknowledged position, who sacrificed fortune, health, life itself, to his convictions, and that he was no *bête féroce*, no factious demagogue, but a man, and a humane man too, who could not keep his head cool in stirring times, who was rendered suspicious by constant persecution, and who has been regarded as a personification of murder, because he published every thought in his mind, while others only vented their anger and displayed their suspicions in spoken words."

It must finally be remembered that if Marat was an advocate of ferocity he was also its victim; if the enemies he roused were sincere, they attempted the same weapons as he, and succeeded with a knife. It is almost impossible to abhor Charlotte Corday. She always looks out through the bars in such beauty, that her deed takes on a sanctity. But the mere fact that Marat was unpleasant to the eyes should not blind us to the fact that his deeds were no less honestly misguided than hers, and hers no less ruthlessly cruel than

his. They were both victims of an overwhelming social upheaval, and both used ugly weapons earnestly, as did almost everyone about them — royalist, constitutionist, Vendean, communard, foreigner, native citizen, or peasant. Marat is a tragic figure in history and worthy of abundant abhorrence, if ever man were; but he should not be distinguished in infamy beyond his desert.[a]

CONSTITUTION OF THE YEAR III

The discussion of the new constitution promised a return to a system of law and order. The general insurrection of the provinces tempered the zeal, if it did not excite the fears of the leaders in the capital. As the provinces succumbed, however, feelings of irritation and vengeance appeared; the revolutionary monster felt the return of its access of fury, that had for a moment been allayed. The new constitution, one as democratic as could well be formed, was to be proclaimed and inaugurated on the 10th of August, 1793. The departments, which in two months had almost all given in their submission to the convention, were requested to send commissaries to Paris in token of reconciliation. They came; and on the 10th of August Paris enjoyed the spectacle of a third federation, celebrating the birth of the third constitution that had been framed in the short space of four years. The ceremony was arranged by the painter David.[b]

David was inspired by Robespierre. Nature, reason, creed, country — were the only divinities who presided at this regeneration of the social world. The people were there the only majesty. Symbols and allegories were the sole objects of adoration. Soul was wanting there because God was absent. Robespierre dared not yet unveil his image. The place of union and the point of departure of the cortège, as in all the fêtes of the Revolution, was the site of the Bastille, marked as the first step of the republic. Upon the ground of the Bastille a fountain, called the fountain of Regeneration, washed away the traces of former servitude. A colossal statue of Nature, whose breasts poured forth water, presided over this fountain. The cup circulated from hand to hand amongst all the assistants. The cortège defiled, to the sound of cannon, upon the boulevards.

Each society raised its flag, each section its symbol. The members of the convention advanced last, each one holding in the hand a bouquet of flowers, fruit, and fresh ears of corn. The tables on which the Rights of Man were written, and the ark in which the constitution was enclosed, were carried as holy relics into the midst of the convention, by eight of its members. Eighty-six envoys of the primary assemblies, representing eighty-six departments, walked round the members of the convention, and unrolled from one hand to the other, around the national representation, a long tricoloured ribbon, which seemed to enchain the deputies in the bonds of the country. A national *fascis*, crowned with olive branches, exemplified the reconciliation and the unity of the members of the republic. The foundlings in their cradles, the deaf and dumb conversing in the language of signs which science had given them; the ashes of heroes who had died for their country, enclosed in urns, whereon their names were inscribed; a triumphal car, surrounded by the labourer, his wife and his children; and, lastly, tumbrils loaded, as if they were vile spoils, with fragments of tiaras, sceptres, crowns, and broken arms — all these symbols of slavery, superstition, pride, benevolence, labour, glory, innocence, rural life, and warlike virtue marched behind the representatives. Close by a station before Les Invalides, where the multitude saluted its own image in a colossal statue of the people trampling on federalism,

the crowd dispersed itself over the Champ-de-Mars. The representatives and established corps ranged themselves upon the steps of the altar of the country. A million heads bristled upon the sloping steps of this immense amphitheatre; a million voices swore to defend the principles of the social code, presented by Hérault de Séchelles to the acceptation of the republic. The salvos of cannon seemed themselves to swear extermination to the foes of the country.[d]

CARLYLE ON THE NEW CALENDAR

As to the New Calendar, we may say here rather than elsewhere that speculative men have long been struck with the inequalities and incongruities of the Old Calendar; that a New one has long been as good as determined on. Maréchal the Atheist, almost ten years ago, proposed a New Calendar, free at least from superstition: this the Paris Municipality would now adopt, in defect of a better; at all events, let us have either this of Maréchal's or a better, — the New Era being come. Petitions, more than once, have been sent to that effect; and indeed, for a year past, all Public Bodies, Journalists, and Patriots in general, have dated "First Year of the Republic." It is a subject not without difficulties. But the Convention has taken it up; and Romme, as we say, has been meditating it; not Maréchal's New Calendar, but a better New one of Romme's and our own. Romme, aided by a Monge, a Lagrange and others, furnishes mathematics; Fabre d'Églantine furnishes poetic nomenclature: and so, on the 5th of October, 1793, after trouble enough, they bring forth this New Republican Calendar of theirs, in a complete state; and by Law, get it put in action.

Four equal Seasons, Twelve equal Months of Thirty days each; this makes three hundred and sixty days; and five odd days remain to be disposed of. The five odd days we will make Festivals, and name the five *Sansculottides*, or Days without Breeches. Festival of Genius; Festival of Labour; of Actions; of Rewards; of Opinion: these are the five Sansculottides. Whereby the great Circle, or Year, is made complete: solely every fourth year, whilom called Leap-year, we introduce a sixth Sansculottide: and name it Festival of the Revolution. Now as to the day of commencement, which offers difficulties, is it not one of the luckiest coincidences that the Republic herself commenced on the 21st of September; close on the Autumnal[1] Equinox? Autumnal Equinox, at midnight for the meridian of Paris, in the year whilom Christian 1792, from that moment shall the New Era reckon itself to begin. *Vendémiaire, Brumaire, Frimaire;* or as one might say, in mixed English, *Vintagearious, Fogarious, Frostarious:* these are our three Autumn months. *Nivôse, Pluviôse, Ventôse*, or say, *Snowous, Rainous, Windous*, make our Winter season. *Germinal, Floréal, Prairial*, or *Buddal, Floweral, Meadowal*, are our Spring season. *Messidor, Thermidor, Fructidor*, that is to say (*dor* being Greek for *gift*) *Reapidor, Heatidor, Fruitidor*, are Republican Summer. These Twelve, in a singular manner, divide the Republican Year. Then as to minuter subdivisions, let us venture at once on a bold stroke: adopt your decimal subdivision; and instead of the world-old Week, or *Se'ennight*, make it a *Tennight*, or *Décade;* — not without results. There are three Decades, then, in each of the months; which is very regular; and the *Décadi*, or Tenth-day, shall always be the "Day of Rest." And the Christian Sabbath, in that case? Shall shift for itself!

This, in brief, is the New Calendar of Romme and the Convention; calculated for the meridian of Paris, and Gospel of Jean Jacques: not one

[1 Strange to say. Carlyle says "Vernal" Equinox.]

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of the least afflicting occurrences for the actual British reader of French History;—confusing the soul with *Messidors, Meadowals;* till at last, in self-defence, one is forced to construct some ground-scheme, or rule of Commutation from New-style to Old-style, and have it lying by him. Such ground-scheme, almost worn out in our service, but still legible and printable, we shall now, in a Note, present to the reader. For the Romme Calendar, in so many Newspapers, Memoirs, Public Acts, has stamped itself deep into that section of Time: a New Era that lasts some Twelve years and odd is not to be despised.[1] Let the reader, therefore, with such ground-scheme, help himself where needful, out of New-style into Old-style, called also "slave-style" (*stile-esclave*)—whereof we, in these pages, shall as much as possible use the latter only. Thus, with new Feast of Pikes, and New Era or New Calendar, did France accept her New Constitution: the most Democratic Constitution ever committed to paper.[e]

THE LEVY *EN MASSE*

Public instinct, however, only accepted the constitution as a future matter. Everyone felt that its execution should be adjourned until the pacification of the empire. A petition from the envoys of the departments urged the convention to continue the government alone. Pache reassembled the commune, and caused the *rappel* to be beaten in all the sections. An address drawn up by Robespierre was carried by thousands of citizens to the convention, to conjure them to retain the supreme power. This dialogue of a thousand voices of the people and its representatives was accompanied by sound of drums and the voice of the tocsin. It was evident that the Jacobins exercised the influence of the people over the convention to make it give birth to terror. "Legislators," said they in the address, "elevate yourselves to the height of the great destiny of France. Half measures are always mortal in extreme danger. It is easier to move a whole nation than a part of it. If you required one hundred thousand men, perhaps you would not find them; if you demand millions of republicans, you will see them arise to crush the enemies of liberty! The people no longer desire a war of tactics, where traitorous and perfidious generals sell the blood of the citizens. Let no one

[1] September 22nd of 1792 is Vendémiaire 1st of Year One, and the new months are all of 30 days each; therefore:

To the number of the day in	ADD	We have the number of the day in	DAYS
Vendémiaire	21	September	30
Brumaire	21	October	31
Frimaire	20	November	30
Nivôse	20	December	31
Pluviôse	19	January	31
Ventôse	18	February	28
Germinal	20	March	31
Floréal	19	April	30
Prairial	19	May	31
Messidor	18	June	30
Thermidor	18	July	31
Fructidor	17	August	31

There are 5 Sansculottides, and in leap-year a sixth, to be added at the end of Fructidor. The New Calendar ceased on the 1st of January, 1806.

be exempted; let agriculture alone reserve the arms necessary for the sowing of the earth and the reaping of the harvest; let the course of things be interrupted; let the grand and only business of the French be to save the republic."

The convention arose in enthusiasm, as an example of representatives to citizens, and voted the following decree: "From this moment and until the day when the enemy shall have been driven from the territory of the republic, all the French are in permanent requisition for the service of the armies. The young men will go to battle, the married men will forge arms and transport provisions, the women will make tents and clothes, and will serve in the hospitals: the children will make lint to dress the wounded; the old men will cause themselves to be carried in the public places, to excite the courage of the warriors, the hatred of kings, and the love of the republic. The national buildings will be converted into barracks, the public places into armouries. The soil of the cellars will be lyed to extract saltpetre from it. Arms of calibre will be exclusively confided to those who march against the enemy. Fowling pieces and naked weapons will be bestowed upon the public force in the interior. Saddle-horses will be required to complete corps of cavalry. All draught-horses, which are not required for agriculture, will conduct the artillery and provisions. The committee of public safety is charged to originate everything, to organise everything, to require all throughout the republic, men and material, for the execution of these measures. The representatives of the people, who are sent into their respective circuits, are invested with absolute powers for this object. The levy will be general. Those citizens who are unmarried, or widowers without children, will march first. They will repair to the principal place in their district, and will there be exercised in the use of arms, until their departure for the armies. The banner of each organised battalion shall bear this inscription: '*Le peuple français debout contre les tyrans!*'"

These measures, very far from alarming the generality of France, were received by patriots with the enthusiasm which had inspired them. Battalions were raised with more celerity and regularity than in 1792. On registering the lists of the first officers who were named, all the heroic names of the military empire of France were there to be found. They sprang from the republic. The glory with which despotism armed itself at a later period against liberty belonged entirely to the Revolution.

Those decrees were completed in the space of two months by others impressed with the same defensive energy. It was the organisation of the enthusiasm and the despair of a people who knew how to die, and of a cause which must triumph. France was at the Thermopylæ of the Revolution, but this Thermopylæ was as extended as the frontiers of the republic, and the combatants consisted of twenty-eight millions of men.

The commission of finance, through Cambon, its reporter and its oracle, ruled with an honest and healing hand over the disorder of the bankrupt treasury, and over the chaos into which the mass and the discredit of the assignats had thrown private and public affairs. To increase the quantity of ready money requisite for the small daily transactions of the people, the bells of the churches were cast, and the sacred metal was thrown to the people struck into coin of the republic. The public prosperity of France still at this day rests upon the basis instituted by Cambon.

The unity of weights and measures; the application of the discovery of balloons to military operations; the establishment of telegraphic lines to bear the hand of government, as promptly as its thoughts, to the extremities of the

republic ; the formation of national museums to excite by example the taste and cultivation of the arts ; the creation of a uniform civil code for all parts of France, to the end that justice should there be as one with the country ; in short, public education, that second nature of civilised people — were the objects of the many discussions and decrees which attested to the world that the republic had faith in itself, and founded a future, by disputing the morrow with its enemies. Equality of education was proclaimed, as a principle flowing from the rights of man. The convention decreed national establishments of public education, which all the youths of the country should be compelled to frequent ; but it permitted families the right of retaining their children under the paternal roof ; thus bestowing instruction upon the state, education to the fathers, heart to the family, and soul to the country.

From decrees of violence, vengeance, and sacrilege sprang these decrees of power, wisdom, and magnanimity. The menacing movements of the people of Paris, who were beset with the reality of famine and the phantom of monopoly, the ravings of Chaumette and Hébert in the commune, compelled the convention to make deplorable concessions, which resembled zeal, but which were only weakness. The convention decreed a maximum — that is to say, an arbitrary price — below which no bread, meat, fish, salt, wine, coals, wood, soap, oil, sugar, iron, hides, tobacco, and stuffs could be sold. It fixed likewise the maximum of wages. It was making itself master of all the liberty in commercial transactions, in speculation and labour, which exist only in a state of liberty. It was placing the hand of the state amongst all sellers, all purchasers, all labourers, and all proprietors of the republic. Such a law could not but produce the concealment of capital, the cessation of work, the languor of all circulation, and the ruin of all.

The maximum brought forth its fruit by compressing in every direction the circulation of ready money, labour, and provisions. The people laid the blame of these calamities of nature upon the rich, upon the merchants, and upon the counter-revolutionists. They pursued the counter-revolution, even to its most impotent victims, buried in the dungeons of the Temple, and the remains of its kings interred in the tombs of St. Denis. The convention decreed that the process against the queen Marie Antoinette should be acted upon ; that the royalist tombs of St. Denis should be destroyed, and the ashes of the kings swept from the temple which the superstition of royalty had consecrated to them. These concessions were not enough for the people. They demanded loudly a zealous tribunal respecting property or pillage. "If you do not give us justice on the rich," exclaimed an orator in the Jacobins, "we will take it ourselves."

ORGANISATION OF THE TERROR

The addresses of the societies of the departments also demanded an institution which should restrain the force of the people, and regulate their violence, in the shape of a perambulating army, charged with the execution of its will. This was the revolutionary army, to wit, a corps of popular pretorians, composed of veterans of the insurrection, hardened against tears, blood, and punishment, and parading throughout the whole republic the instrument of death and terror. Crowds of workmen, of beggars, and women, vociferating death or bread, collected round the Hôtel-de-Ville, and threatened the alarmed convention with a new 31st of May. Robespierre in vain essayed many times to restrain these petitioners, thirsty for pillage and blood. His

popularity with difficulty survived his resistance to excess. He often entered alone and forsaken into his dwelling.

Barrère ascended the tribune, in the name of the committee of public safety, to demand the origination of terror, and to regulate it when decreed. "For some time past," said he, "the aristocrats of the interior have meditated a movement. Well, they shall have this motion ; but it shall be against themselves. They shall have it organised, and regulated by a revolutionary army, which will, in short, execute that great motto which we owe to the commune of Paris. Let us institute terror as the order of the day. The royalists desire blood : well, they will have that of the conspirators, of Brissot, of Marie Antoinette ! This is no longer illegal vengeance, it proceeds from extraordinary tribunals, which have wrought it." The decree which these words summed up was carried by acclamation.

A second decree banished all those who had belonged to the military establishment of the king or his brothers to a distance of twenty leagues from Paris. Another re-established nocturnal visits in the dwellings of the citizens. Another ordered the transportation of common women, who corrupted the manners and enervated the republicanism of the young citizens, beyond sea. Another voted a payment of two francs per day to those workmen who left their workshops to assist in the assemblies of their section ; and of three francs per day to the men of the people who should be members of the revolutionary committees. It fixed two sittings per week, the Sunday and the Thursday, for these patriotic assemblies. The sittings were to commence at five o'clock and to finish at ten. Lastly, another reorganised the revolutionary tribunal. It was the justice of terror.

This tribunal, instituted by the vengeance of the morrow of the 10th of August, had been until then tempered by the forms and humanity of the Girondists. In two years, it had tried only one hundred accused, and had acquitted the greater number of them. The installation of this tribunal of state recalled by its forms that the people took all power into their own hands, even justice ; and that they were to sit themselves, and judge their enemies by means of juries composed of simple citizens chosen from and elected by the crowd. Death, according to them, was necessary in the dawn of the Revolution. They consented to act the part of death. Such men are to be found throughout all history : as wood, iron, and fire are found to construct an instrument of punishment, so are judges found to condemn the vanquished, satellites to pursue the victims, and executioners to immolate them.

Merlin de Douai presented on the 17th of September a project of a decree whose meshes, woven by the hand of an able lawyer, enveloped the whole of France in a legal net, which left no resource to innocence, nothing free from treachery. The secret intentions of Merlin in presenting this decree were, it is said, rather to shield the victims from the people than to surrender the guilty to the revolutionary tribunal. Such was the state of the times that the prison seemed to him the only refuge from assassination. The decree of Merlin, composed of seventy-four incriminations, arising from all the suspicions that lurked in every man's brain, became the most complete arsenal of arbitrary rule that the complaisance of a legislator placed in the hands of power. The first article was, "Immediately after the publication of this present decree, all suspected persons who are found in the territory of the republic, and who are still at liberty, shall be arrested."

The prisons were not sufficient to contain the immense number of prisoners, and the public edifices, the confiscated hotels, the churches and convents

were converted into places of confinement. The punishment of death, multiplied in proportion to this multiplication of crimes, came from hour to hour, and decree to decree, to arm the judges with the right of decimating the suspected. Did anyone refuse to march to the frontier, or surrender his arms to those on the way thither — death. Did anyone shelter an emigrant or fugitive — death. Did anyone transmit money to a son or friend beyond the frontier — death. Was an innocent correspondence maintained with an exile, or a single letter received — death. Did anyone aid prisoners to communicate with their friends — death. Was the value of assignats diminished — death. Were they purchased at a premium — death. Did two witnesses attest that a priest or a noble had taken part in an anti-revolutionary meeting — death. Did a prisoner endeavour to burst his bonds and escape — death pursued the very instinct of life. Death was soon suspended over the heads of even the judges. A decree, dated a few days later, ordered the dismissal, imprisonment, and trial of such revolutionary committees as had left a single suspected person at liberty.

The convention, deliberating and acting, — present everywhere in its emissaries, maintaining an incessant correspondence with them, inspiring, stimulating, punishing, and recalling them, — such was the terrible mechanism of that dictatorship which succeeded the hesitations and commotions of the government after the fall of the Gironde, and which is called the Terror. Irresistible and atrocious as the despair of a revolution which feels its aim frustrated, and of a nation which feels itself perishing, this dictatorship makes us tremble with astonishment, and shudder with horror. This government of an extreme crisis cannot be judged by the rules applicable to ordinary governments. It termed itself revolutionary government; that is, subversion, strife, tyranny. The convention considered itself as the garrison of France, shut up in a nation in a state of siege.[1] Resolved to save the Revolution and the country, or perish in their ruins, it suspended all laws before that of the common danger. It created a revolutionary machine, sprung from, superior to, and stronger than, itself. The Terror was invented by Robespierre and Danton, less against the internal enemies of the republic than against the excesses and anarchies of the Revolution herself.

Moreover, the Terror was not a calm and cruel calculation of a few men, deliberating coldly on a system of government. It sprang by degrees from circumstances and the tension of things and men, placed in difficult positions, from which their genius furnished them no other means of extricating themselves than by destruction and death. It arose chiefly from that fatal and ambitious rivalry, that struggle for proofs of patriotism, for popularity, of which each man and party reproached his or their opponents with not offering sufficient to the Revolution — with which Barnave reproached Mirabeau; Brissot, Barnave; Robespierre, Brissot; Danton, Robespierre; Marat, Danton; Hébert, Marat; everyone the Girondists: so that to prove his patriotism, every man and party was forced to exaggerate his proofs by exaggerating measures, suspicions, excesses, and crimes; until from this pressure, which all men exercised against each other, there should result a general emulation — half feigned, half sincere — which should envelop them in the mutual dread they communicated, and which they cast on their enemies to avert it from themselves.

[1 "It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the whole of the system of Terror was due to the perils in the provinces and on the frontiers. Extraordinary were those difficulties, and equally extraordinary means of government were necessary to meet them. Such means were found in the immense powers given to the committees of public safety and of general security, and to the revolutionary tribunal." — H. Morse Stephens.]

And in the people themselves the convulsive agitation of a revolution of three years' duration, the dread of losing a conquest they valued the more from its being the more recent and more contested; the incessant fever which the tribunes, the journals, and the clubs disseminated each day amongst the populace; the cessation of labour, the prospects of the agrarian law, and general pillage by those greedy of gain, despairing patriotism, the treason of the generals, the invasion of the frontiers, the Vendeans setting up the standard of royalism and religion, the scarcity of money, the famine panic, the thirst of blood inspired by the days of the 14th of July, 6th of October, 10th of August, and 2nd of September, and that furious rage for extermination, which lurks in the instincts of the multitude, which awakes in time of great commotion, and which demands to gorge itself with blood when it has once tasted it — such were the elements of the Terror. Calculation in some, *entraînement* in others; weakness in these, concession in those; fear and passion in the greater number; a moral epidemic tainting an already vitiated air, and from which predisposed minds no more escape than morbid bodies from a prevailing disease; a contagion to which everyone lends his share of miasma and complicity; the Terror sprang from itself, and died as it was born, when the tension of affairs was relaxed, without being conscious of its death, any more than it was conscious of its birth. Such is the progress of human things, for which our infirmity leads us to seek one cause, when it results from a thousand different and complicated causes; and to which is given the name of one man, when they should bear the name of the period.

The coalition of crowned heads watched every movement of France, and encircled it with 700,000 men. The émigrés were advancing at the head of foreigners, and already fraternised with royalism in Valenciennes and Condé. La Vendée had roused the whole of the west, and with one hand united its religious rising with the insurrection in Normandy, and with the other joined the insurrection in the south. Marseilles had unfurled the flag of federalism, scarcely yet defeated in Paris. Toulon and the fleet were plotting their defection, and opening their roadsteads and arsenals to the English. Lyons, declaring itself a sovereign municipality, cast into prison the representatives of the people, and erected its guillotine for the partisans of the convention.

To make temporary, secure, and impartial laws, and enforce their penalty, is the right of every dictatorship; to proscribe and kill, against all laws and against all justice, to inundate scaffolds with blood, to deliver not the accused to the tribunals but victims to the executioner, to command verdicts instead of awaiting them, to give to citizens their enemies as judges, to encourage informers, to throw to assassins the spoils of the sufferers, to imprison and immolate on mere suspicion, to pervert into crime the feelings of nature, to confound ages, sex, old people, children, wives, mothers, daughters in the crimes of fathers, husbands, brothers — is not dictatorship but proscription. Such was the twofold character of the Terror. By the one the convention will remain as a monument in the breach of a country saved — a Revolution defended; by the other its memory will be stained with blood, which history will perpetually stir without ever being able to efface it from its name.

One of the first great victims of the Terror was General Custine. His crime was having mingled science with war. The Mountainists desired a rapid and cursory campaign; they required plebeian generals to direct the plebeian masses, and ignorant generals to invent modern warfare. Custine, carried away from the midst of his army, by whom he was adored, by the commissary of the convention, Levasseur, had arrived in Paris to render an account of his inactivity. His death caused all thoughts of treason to

re-enter the hearts of the generals, all sorts of insubordination to affect duty; the head of their most popular chief had fallen before the astonished army. It showed them that they had no other chief than the convention.

THE TRIAL OF THE QUEEN

Ninety-eight executions had in sixty days imbued the scaffold with blood. The axe of terror once placed in the hands of the people could no longer be withdrawn. Implacable and cowardly vengeance incessantly demanded the head of Marie Antoinette. The blind unpopularity of this unfortunate princess had outlived even her fall and disappearance. She was, in the words of the hardened people, the counter-revolution chained, but still the counter-revolution existing. In slaying Louis XVI the people well knew that they had but immolated the hand. The soul of the court was, with the enemies of royalty, in Marie Antoinette. In their eyes, Louis XVI was the personification of royalty; in his wife was lodged its crime. There was no member of the committee who thought her dangerous to the Revolution; some blushed at the necessity of delivering up this victim. Robespierre himself, so incensed against the king, would have preserved the queen. "If my head were not necessary to the Revolution," he said, "there are moments when I would offer that head to the people in exchange for one of those which they demand of us."

MARIE ANTOINETTE
(1755–1793)

We left the royal family in the Temple, at the moment when the king tore himself from their last embraces to walk to the scaffold. Some relaxation of rigour in the interior captivity of the princesses followed the death of the king. At first the commissioners of the Temple hoped that the contented republic would not delay setting at liberty the women and the children. After a debate of the 26th of March, the council of the commune ordered that spaces of the battlements of the tower should be filled up by shutters, which, permitting the air to penetrate, yet intercepted the view. The queen's captivity became closer. The sensibility, however, which rules even opinion, had introduced devoted men through the wickets of the Temple. Hue, *valet-de-chambre* to the king, who had remained free and forgotten in Paris, thus transmitted to the princesses the facts, the reports, the hopes, and the plots outside, which affected their situation. These communications, verbal or written, could not reach the captives without precautions and devices, which blinded the eyes of the other commissioners. The events within and without, the disposition of men's minds, the progress

of La Vendée, the success of foreign armies, the glare of false hopes, which enlightened chimerical conspiracies for their deliverance, and, lastly, some letters, bathed in tears of real friendship, entered thus into the prison of Marie Antoinette. But hope entered not into her soul. The horror of her situation was precisely that of having nothing more to fear, and nothing more to hope.

After the 31st of May, the terror which reigned in Paris had penetrated even to the dungeon, and gave to men, to purposes, and to measures a character of rigour and persecution still more odious. Each municipal proved his patriotism by exceeding his predecessor in insults. The convention, after having decreed that the queen should be judged, ordered her to be separated from her son They desired this order to be read to the royal family. The child threw himself into his mother's arms, beseeching her not to abandon him to his executioners. The queen placed him upon her bed, and, interposing herself between him and the municipals, declared to them that they should kill her on the spot sooner than approach him. Menaced in vain by violence if she continued to resist the decree, she contended for two hours against the injunctions, the threats, the abuse, and the gestures of the commissioners, until her strength was totally exhausted. At length, having fallen through lassitude at the foot of the bed, and persuaded by Madame Elizabeth and by her daughter, she dressed the dauphin, and transferred him, bathed with her tears, to the jailers.

The shoemaker Simon, selected, from the brutality of his manners, to replace the heart of a mother, carried the dauphin into the chamber where that young king was doomed to die. The child remained two days lying on the floor without accepting any nourishment. No supplication of the queen could obtain from the commune the favour of a single interview with her son. Fanaticism had murdered nature. The doors of the apartment of the princesses were kept bolted night and day. The municipals themselves no longer appeared there. The turnkeys alone ascended three times a day to bring them provisions and inspect the bars of the windows. No waiting-woman had replaced the wife of Tison, who was confined in a lunatic asylum. Madame Elizabeth and the young princess made the beds, swept the chamber, and waited upon the queen. The only consolation of the princesses was to ascend each day the platform of their tower, at the hour when the young dauphin walked on that on his side, and to watch for an opportunity of exchanging a look with him. The queen passed all the time of these promenades, her eyes bent upon a fissure in the skylight, between the battlements, endeavouring to catch a glimpse of the shadow of her child, and to hear his voice.

The obscenity and brutality of Simon depraved at once the body and soul of his pupil. He called him the young wolf of the Temple. He treated him as the young of wild animals are treated, when taken from the mother and reduced to captivity; at once intimidated by blows, and enervated by the taming of their keepers. He punished him for sensibility; he rewarded meanness; he encouraged vice; he taught the child to insult the memory of his father, the tears of his mother, the piety of his aunt, the innocence of his sister, and the fidelity of his partisans. He made him sing obscene songs in honour of the republic, of the *lanterne*, and of the scaffold. Often intoxicated, Simon amused himself with this derision of fortune which delighted his base mind. He made the child wait upon him at table, himself seated, the former standing. One day, in cruel sport, he nearly tore an eye from the dauphin's head, by striking him on the face with a knotted towel. Another time he

seized a poker from the hearth, raised it over the child's head, and threatened to knock him down. More frequently he was lenient with him, and feigned to compassionate his age and misfortune, in order to gain his confidence, and report his conversation to Hébert and Chaumette. "Capet," said he to him one day, at the moment when the Vendean army passed the Loire, "if the Vendeans should deliver you, what would you do?" "I would forgive you," replied the child. Simon himself was affected by this answer, and recognised therein the blood of Louis XVI. But this man, led astray by pride at his importance, by fanaticism, and by wine, was neither susceptible of constant brutality nor of lasting kindness. It was drunkenness and ferocity charged by fate with the debasement and denaturalising of the last germ of royalty.

On the 2nd of August, at two o'clock in the morning, the queen was awakened, that the decree might be read which ordained her removal to the Conciergerie, whilst her trial was proceeding. She heard the order read without betraying either astonishment or grief. It was one step nearer the end which she saw was inevitable, and which she wished nearer. A carriage, into which two municipals ascended with her, and which was escorted by *gendarmes*, conducted her to the Conciergerie.

These gigantic substructures served as a foundation to the high quadrangular tower, from which once all the fiefs of the kingdom were raised. This tower was the centre of monarchy. Thus, it was under this palace of feudalism itself that the vengeance or the derision of fate confined the agony of monarchy and the punishment of feudalism. Who would have told the kings of the first races that in this palace they erected the prison and the tomb of their successors? Time is the grand expiator of human affairs. But, alas! it avenged itself blindly, and it washed out, with the tears and the blood of a female victim of the throne, the wrongs and oppression of twenty kings!

At the bottom of a little cellar, a miserable pallet, without canopy or curtains, with covering of coarse cloth, such as that which passes from one bed to the other in hospitals and barracks, a small deal table, a wooden box, and two straw chairs, formed all the furniture. It was there that in the middle of the night, and by the light of a tallow candle, the queen of France was thrown, fallen from grade to grade, from misfortune to misfortune, from Versailles and from Trianon, even into this dungeon. Two *gendarmes*, with naked swords in hand, were placed on duty in the first chamber, with the door open, and their eyes fixed on the interior of the queen's cell, being charged not to lose sight of her even in her sleep.

During the last days of her confinement, the jailer had obtained permission, under the pretext of better guaranteeing his responsibility, that the *gendarmes* should be withdrawn from the interior, and placed outside the door in the corridor. The queen had no longer to submit to the stare, the conversation, and the continual insults of her inspectors. She had no longer any society but her thoughts. She passed the hours in reading, meditation, and prayer.

On the 13th of October, Fouquier-Tinville came to notify her of his act of accusation. She listened to it as a form of death, which was not worth the honour of discussion. Her crime was being a queen, the consort and mother of a king, and the having abhorred a revolution which deprived her of a crown, of her husband, her children, and her life. To love the Revolution, she must have hated nature, and destroyed all human feeling. Between her and the republic there was no legal form — it was hatred even to death. The stronger of the two inflicted it on the other. It was not

justice, it was vengeance; the queen knew it; the woman received it: she could not repent; and she would not supplicate. She chose, as a matter of form, two defenders — Chauveau-Lagarde and Tronson du Coudray. These advocates, young, generous, and of high repute, had secretly solicited this honour. They sought, in the solemn trial of the revolutionary tribunal, not a despicable salary for their eloquence, but the applause of posterity.

The following day, the 14th of October, at noon, she dressed herself, and arranged her hair, with all the decorum which the simplicity and poverty of her garments permitted. She did not dream of moving the regards of the people to pity. Her dignity as a woman and a queen forbade her to make any display of her misery. She ascended the stairs of the judgment-hall, surrounded by a strong escort of *gendarmerie*, crossed through the multitude, which so solemn a vengeance had drawn into the passages, and seated herself upon the bench of the accused. Her forehead, scathed by the Revolution, and faded by grief, was neither humbled nor cast down. Her eyes, surrounded by that black circle which want of rest and tears had graved like a bed of sorrow beneath the eyelids, still darted some rays of their former brilliancy upon the faces of her enemies. The beauty which had intoxicated the court and dazzled Europe was no longer discernible; but its traces could still be distinguished. Her mouth sorrowfully preserved the folds of royal pride, but ill effaced by the lines of long suffering. Her hair, whitened by anguish, contrasted with this youth of countenance and figure, and flowed down upon her neck as in bitter derision of the fate of youth and beauty. Her countenance was natural — not that of an irritated queen, insulting in the depth of her contempt the people who triumphed over her, nor that of a suppliant who intercedes by her humility, and who seeks forbearance in compassion, but that of a victim whom long misfortune had habituated to her lot, who had forgotten that she was a queen, who remembered only that she was a woman, who claimed nothing of her vanished rank; who resigned nothing of the dignity of her sex and her deep distress.

The crowd, silent through curiosity rather than emotion, contemplated her with eager looks. The populace seemed to rejoice at having this haughty woman at their feet, and measured their greatness and their strength by the fall of their most formidable enemy. The crowd was composed principally of women, who had undertaken to accompany the condemned to the scaffold with every possible insult. "What is your name?" demanded Hermann of the accused. "I am called Marie Antoinette of Lorraine, and Austria," answered the queen. Her low and agitated voice seemed to ask pardon of the audience for the greatness of these names. "Your condition?" "Widow of Louis, formerly king of the French." "Your age?" "Thirty-seven."

Fouquier-Tinville read the act of accusation to the tribunal. It was the summing up of all the supposed crimes of birth, rank, and situation of a young queen; a stranger, adored in her court, omnipotent over the heart of a weak king, prejudiced against ideas which she did not comprehend, and against institutions which dethroned her. This part of the accusation was but the act of accusation of fate. These crimes were true, but they were the faults of her rank. The queen could no more absolve herself from them than the people from accusing her of them. The remainder of the act of accusation was only an odious echo of all the reports and murmurs which had crept during ten years into public belief, of prodigality, supposed licentiousness, and pretended treason of the queen. It was her unpopularity converted into crimination. She heard all this without betraying any sign of emotion or astonishment, as a woman accustomed to hatred, and with whom calumny

had lost its bitterness, and insult its poignancy. Her fingers wandered heedlessly over the bar of the chair, like those of a woman who recalls remembrances upon the keys of a harpsichord. She endured the voice of Fouquier-Tinville, but she heard him not. The witnesses were called and interrogated. After each evidence Hermann addressed the accused. She answered with presence of mind, and briefly discussed the evidence as she refuted it. The only error in this defence was the defence itself.

The answers of Marie Antoinette compromised no one. She offered herself alone to the hatred of her enemies; and generously shielded all her friends. She evinced her determination not to abandon her sentiments before death, and that if she delivered her head up to the people, she would not yield them her heart to profane. The ignominy of certain accusations sought to dishonour her, even in her maternal feelings. The cynic Hébert, who was heard as a witness upon what had passed at the Temple, imputed acts of depravity and debauchery to the queen, extending even to the corruption of her own son, "with the intention," said he, "of enervating the soul and body of that child, and reigning in his name over the ruin of his understanding."

The pious Madame Elizabeth was named as witness and accomplice in these crimes. The indignation of the audience broke out at these words, not against the accused, but against the accuser. Outraged nature aroused itself. The queen made a sign of horror, not knowing how to answer without soiling her lips.

A juryman took up the testimony of Hébert, and asked the accused why she had not replied to this accusation? "I have not answered it," said she, rising with the majesty of innocence, and the indignation of modesty, "because there are accusations to which nature refuses to reply." Afterwards, turning towards the women of the audience, the most enraged against her, and summoning them by the testimony of their hearts and their community of sex, "I appeal against it to all mothers here present," cried she. A shudder of horror against Hébert ran through the crowd. The queen answered with no less dignity to the imputations which were alleged against her of having abused her ascendency over the weakness of her husband. "I never knew that character of him," said she; "I was but his wife, and my duty, as well as my pleasure, was to conform to his will." She did not sacrifice by a single word the memory and honour of the king for the purpose of her own justification, or to the pride of having reigned in his name.

After the closing of these long debates, Hermann summed up the accusation, and declared that the entire French people deposed against Marie Antoinette. He invoked punishment in the name of equality in crime and equality in punishment—and put the question of guilty to the jury. Chauveau-Lagarde and Tronson du Coudray, in their defence, excited posterity without being able to affect the audience or the judges. The jury deliberated for form's sake, and returned to the hall after an hour's interval. The queen was called to hear her sentence. She had already heard it in the stamping and joy of the crowd, which filled the palace. She listened to it without uttering a single word, or making any motion. Hermann asked her if she had anything to say upon the pain of death being pronounced upon her. She shook her head, and arose as if to walk to her execution. She disdained to reproach the people with the rigour of her destiny and with their cruelty. She wrapped herself in that silence which was her last protection. Ferocious applause followed her even to the staircase which descends from the tribunal to the prison.

THE LAST HOURS OF MARIE ANTOINETTE

The first light of day began to struggle under these vaults with the flambeaux with which the *gendarmes* lighted their steps. It was four in the morning. Her last day had commenced. She was placed, while awaiting the hour of punishment, in the dark hall wherein the condemned await the executioner. She asked the jailer for ink, paper, and a pen, and wrote the following letter to her sister, which was found afterwards amongst the papers of Couthon, to whom Fouquier-Tinville rendered homage, by these curiosities of death and relics of royalty.

This 15th October, at half-past four in the morning.

I write you, my sister, for the last time. I have been condemned, not to an ignominious death, that only awaits criminals, but to go and rejoin your brother. Innocent as he, I hope to show the same firmness as he did in these last moments. I grieve bitterly at leaving my poor children; you know that I existed but for them and you—you who have by your friendship sacrificed all to be with us. Let my son never forget the last words of his father. I repeat them to him expressly: "Let him never attempt to avenge our death!"

I die in the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion; in that of my fathers; in that in which I have been bred, and which I have always professed, having no spiritual consolation to expect, not knowing if priests of this religion still exist here—and even the place in which I am would expose them too much, were they once to enter it. I sincerely ask pardon of God for all the errors I may have committed during my life. I hope that, in his kindness, he will accept my last vows, as well as those I have long since made, that he may vouchsafe to receive my soul in his mercy and goodness. I ask pardon of all those with whom I am acquainted, and of you, my sister, in particular, for all the trouble which, without desiring it, I may have caused you. I forgive all my enemies the evil they have done me. I say here adieu to my aunts, and to all my brothers and sisters. I had friends, and the idea of being separated forever from them and their sorrows causes me the greatest regret I experience in dying. Let them, at least, know that in my last moments I have thought of them. Adieu, my good and kind sister! May this letter reach you! Think of me always! I embrace you with all my heart, as well as those poor and dear children. My God, how heartrending it is to quit them forever! Adieu! Adieu! I ought no longer to occupy myself, but with my spiritual duties. As I am not mistress of my actions, they may bring me perhaps a priest. But I here protest that I will not tell him one word, and that I will treat him absolutely as a stranger.

This letter being finished, she kissed each page repeatedly, as if they could transmit the warmth of her lips and the moisture of her tears to her children. She folded it without sealing it, and gave it to the concierge Bault. He remitted it to Fouquier-Tinville.

There were constitutional priests. Three amongst them presented themselves during the night at the Conciergerie, and timidly offered their ministry to the queen. One was the constitutional curate of St. Landry, named Girard; another, one of the vicars of the bishop of Paris; the third, an Alsatian priest, named Lothringer. The schism with which they were infected was, in her eyes, one of the stains of the republic. The seemliness of their manners and conversation, however, touched the queen. She coloured her refusal with an expression of gratitude and regret. But the abbé Lothringer persisted in his charity, which more resembled an obligation than a holy work.

Marie Antoinette was only resolved to die as a Christian, as her husband had died, and as her angelic sister, whom she had left as a mother to her children, lived. This sister had procured for her, in secret, a consolation which her piety deemed a necessity of salvation. It was the number and the floor of a house in the rue St. Honoré, before which the condemned passed, and in which a Catholic priest would be on the day of punishment, at the hour of execution, to bestow upon her, from above, and unknown to the people, the absolution and benediction of God. The queen relied on this invisible sacrament, to die in the faith of her race and in reconciliation with heaven.

The queen, after having written and prayed, slept soundly for some hours. On her awakening, the daughter of Madame Bault dressed and adjusted her hair with more neatness and respect for exterior appearance than on other days. Marie Antoinette cast off the black robe she had worn since her husband's death, and dressed herself in a white gown. A white handkerchief covered her shoulders, a white cap her hair. A black ribbon which bound this cap around her temples alone recalled to the world her mourning, to herself her widowhood, and to the people her immolation.

The windows and the parapets, the roofs and the trees were loaded with spectators. A crowd of women enraged against "the Austrian" pressed round the gratings, and even into the courts. A pale cold autumn fog hung over the Seine, and permitted, here and there, some rays of the sun to glitter upon the roofs of the Louvre and upon the tower of the palace. At eleven o'clock the *gendarmes* and the executioners entered the hall of the condemned. The queen embraced the daughter of the concierge, cut her hair off herself, allowed herself to be bound without a murmur, and issued with a firm step from the Conciergerie. No feminine weakness, no faintness of heart, no trembling of the body, nor paleness of features were apparent. Nature obeyed her will, and lent her all its power to die as a queen.

On entering from the staircase to the court, she perceived the cart of the condemned, towards which the *gendarmes* directed her steps. She stopped, as if to retrace her road, and made a motion of astonishment and horror. She had thought that the people would have clothed their hatred somewhat decently, and that she would be conducted to the scaffold, as the king was, in a close carriage. Having compressed this emotion, she bowed her head in token of assent, and ascended the cart. The abbé Lothringer placed himself behind her, notwithstanding her refusal.

The *cortège* left the Conciergerie amidst cries of "*Vive la République!*" "*Place à l'Autrichienne!*" "*Place à la veuve Capet!*" "*A bas la tyrannie!*" The comedian Grammont, aide-de-camp of Ronsin, gave the example and the signal to the people, brandishing his naked sword, and parting the crowd by the breast of his horse. The hands of the queen being bound, deprived her of support against the jolting of the cart upon the pavement. She endeavoured by every means to preserve her equilibrium, and the dignity of her attitude. "These are not your cushions of Trianon," shouted some wretches to her. The cries, the looks, the laughter, and gestures of the people overwhelmed her with humiliation. Her cheeks changed continually from purple to paleness, and revealed the agitation and reflex of her blood. Notwithstanding the care she had taken of her toilette, the tattered appearance of her dress, the coarse linen, the common stuff and the crumpled plaits dishonoured her rank. The curls of her hair escaped from her cap and flapped with the breeze upon her forehead. Her red and swollen eyes, though dry, revealed the long inundation of care augmented by tears. She bit her under lip for some moments with her teeth, as a person who suppressed the utterance of acute suffering.

When she had crossed the Pont-au-Change, and the tumultuous quarters of Paris, the silence and serious aspect of the crowd bespoke another region of the people. If it was not pity, it was at least dismay. Her countenance regained the calm and uniformity of expression which the outrages of the multitude had at first disturbed. She thus traversed slowly the whole length of the rue St. Honoré. The priest placed on the long seat by her side endeavoured in vain to call her attention, by words which she seemed to repel from her ears. Her looks wandered, with all their intelligence, over

the façades of the houses, over the republican inscriptions, and over the costumes and physiognomy of this capital, so changed to her since sixteen months of captivity. She regarded above all the windows of the upper stories, from which floated the tricoloured banner, the ensign of patriotism.

The people thought, and witnesses have written, that her light and puerile attention was attracted to this exterior decoration of republicanism. Her thoughts were different. Her eyes sought a sign of safety amongst these signs of her loss. She approached the house which had been pointed out to her in her dungeon. She examined with a glance the window whence was to descend upon her head the absolution of a disguised priest. A gesture, inexplicable to the multitude, made him known to her. She closed her eyes, lowered her forehead, collected herself under the invisible hand which blessed her; and, being unable to use her bound hands, she made the sign of the cross upon her breast, by three movements of her head. The spectators thought that she prayed alone, and respected her fervency. An inward joy and secret consolation shone from this moment upon her countenance.

On entering upon the place de la Revolution, the leaders of the *cortège* caused the car to approach as near as possible to the Pont Tournant, and stopped it for a short time before the entrance of the gardens of the Tuileries. Marie Antoinette turned her head on the side of her ancient palace, and regarded for some moments that odious and yet dear theatre of her greatness and of her fall. Some tears fell upon her knees. All her past life appeared before her in the hour of death. Some few more turns of the wheels, and she was at the foot of the guillotine. The priest and the executioner assisted her to descend, sustaining her by the elbows. She mounted the steps of the ladder. On reaching the scaffold, she inadvertently trod upon the executioner's foot. This man uttered a cry of pain. "Pardon me," she said to him, in a tone of voice as if she had spoken to one of her courtiers. She knelt down for an instant and murmured a half-audible prayer; afterwards rising, "Adieu once again, my children," said she, regarding the towers of the Temple, "I go to rejoin your father." She did not attempt, like Louis XVI, to justify herself before the people, nor to move them by an appeal to his memory. Her features did not wear, like those of her husband, the impression of the anticipated bliss of the just and the martyr, but that of disdain for mankind and a proper impatience to depart from life.

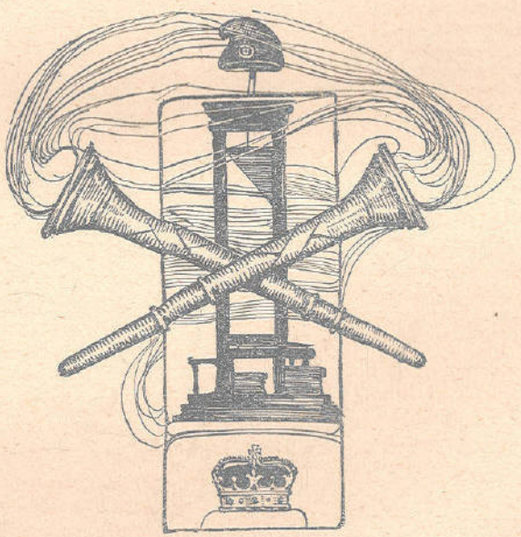
The executioner, trembling more than she, was seized with a tremor which checked his hand when disengaging the axe. The head of the queen fell. The assistant of the guillotine took it up by the hair and made the round of the scaffold, raising it in his right hand and showing it to the people. A long cry of "*Vive la République!*" saluted the decapitated member and already senseless features.

The Revolution believed itself avenged; it was only disgraced. This blood of a woman recoiled upon its glory, without cementing its liberty. Paris, however, felt less emotion at this murder than at that of the king. Public opinion affected an indifference to one of the most odious executions that disgraced the republic. This sacrifice of a queen and a foreigner, amongst a people who had adopted her, had not even the compensation of tragical events — the remorse and grief of a nation.

Thus died this queen, frivolous in prosperity, sublime in misfortune, intrepid upon the scaffold, the idol of a court, mutilated by the people, long the love, and afterwards the blind counsellor, of royalty, and latterly the personal enemy of the Revolution. This Revolution the queen knew neither

how to foresee, to comprehend, nor to accept; she knew only how to irritate and to fear it. She took refuge in the court, in place of throwing herself into the bosom of the people. The people cast on her unjustly all the hatred with which they persecuted the ancient régime. They attached all the scandal and treason of the court to her name. Omnipotent, by her beauty and by her wit, over her husband, she invested him with her unpopularity, and dragged him, by her love, to his destruction. Her vacillating policy, following the impressions of the moment, by turns timid in defeat, and rash in success, neither knew how to recede nor to advance at the proper moment; and ended by converting itself into intrigues with the emigration party and with foreign powers. The charming and dangerous favourite of an antiquated, rather than the queen of a new, monarchy, she had neither the prestige of ancient royalty — respect; nor the prestige of a new reign — popularity; she knew only how to fascinate, to mislead, and to die. Called by a people to occupy a throne, that people did not even grant her a tomb. For we read upon the register of the general interments, in La Madeleine, "For the coffin of the widow Capet, seven francs."

Behold the total of the life of a queen, and of the enormous sums expended during a prodigal reign for the splendour, the pleasures, and bounties of a woman who had possessed Versailles, St. Cloud, and Trianon. When providence desires to address men with the rude eloquence of royal vicissitudes, it speaks with a sign more powerful than the eloquent discourses of Seneca and Bossuet, and inscribes a vile cipher upon the register of a grave-digger![d]



CHAPTER XI

THE REIGN OF TERROR

[1793–1794 A.D.]

> We do well to speak with horror of the Reign of Terror and of the Revolutionary Tribunal, which sent about three thousand persons to death. Yet even here we may remind ourselves that this terribly large number shrinks into insignificance when compared with the innocent persons hurried to more needless wars by the ambition of rulers whom the world delights to honour. Let us clear our minds of cant, and neither extenuate nor exaggerate the horrors; and take what comfort we can from the knowledge that the chief actors honestly believed they were promoting the good of France and of humanity; that the victims almost all met their death with courage and dignity; that the dim millions of Frenchmen gained greatly by the Revolution as a whole, and suffered little from the Reign of Terror. — J. E. Symes.[b]

To read the history of the Revolution is like going with Dante into the Inferno: at every step one thinks to have reached the outermost limits of horror, but each fresh move in advance reveals a new circle with new crimes, all of which are, with inflexible logic, linked into one continuous chain. For it is a truth that when a people is once started on the downward slope of an abyss, unless a vigorous effort is made to save it, it is bound to continue rolling until it reaches the very bottom.

The audience had listened respectfully during the trial of Marie Antoinette, had been awed into silence by the contrast they were obliged to draw between the splendour that had formerly surrounded the most brilliant of queens, and the misery of a prisoner brought from her cell to be delivered up to the mercy of judges who were no better than public accusers. Respect gradually gave way to emotion, and Robespierre, seeing the change, trembled. He had been quick to seize the truth that it was not safe to leave one hour of liberty to the convention; now he saw clearly that his downfall was assured if he allowed one moment of pity to the people.[c]

EXECUTION OF THE GIRONDISTS

For several days in October, 1793, there had been seen walking the streets, and especially in the market-place, women wearing red caps and calling themselves revolutionists. They tried to force this bizarre and extravagant costume on the market-women, but were not successful and were driven out with indignation. But there was some deep purport in this apparent folly, which had been planned in a secret council held at St. Eustache; it was in fact a scheme for a vast assassination. The convention, however, did not want matters to go on so quickly. They decided that women's clubs and societies, whatever they might style themselves, should be forbidden, and more — that all club meetings of the people should be open ones. At a sitting held on the 31st, a deputation, declaring itself representative of all the popular clubs of Paris, asked that henceforth, when individuals were spoken to, they should be addressed as "thee" and "thou" (*tutoyés.*) This petition was vigorously applauded. The most wretched beggar now presumed to "thee" and "thou" those whom he once had hardly dared to look in the face. Valets even spoke thus to their masters, and the latter had to put up with it for fear of being denounced.[d]

Now came the turn of the Girondists to appear before the fatal tribunal. Twenty-one of their members had remained in prison since the 2nd of June; of these the chiefs were Vergniaud, Brissot, Valazé, Gensonné, Lasource, Fonfrède. Their trial was, of course, but the mockery of justice. Chabot and Fabre d'Églantine appeared as witnesses, and uttered, without fear of contradiction, whatever circumstances of conspiracy or crime their imaginations could suggest. The eloquence of Vergniaud, although he had been too careless to prepare a defence, here exerted for the last time, shook the judges and melted the auditors. A decree of the convention instantly stopped the pleadings, and ordered the court to proceed to pass sentence: it was death. The victims hailed the fate, which they had foreseen, with a verse of the Marseillaise hymn, originally applied to the enemies of freedom, now but too applicable to its friends. Valazé, at the moment, pierced himself with a poniard, and fell dead; Vergniaud, more heroic, flung away a box of poison, in order to die with his friends. They were executed on the morrow, showing in death that firmness[1] which, had it been displayed in the acts of their political life, would at least have saved their memory from reprobation, and most probably insured them a glorious and successful career. Those who think that the stern law of retaliation is or should be applied to human fortunes, will say they merited their fate; will argue that those who stirred the mob to the insurrection of the 20th of June, 1792, and who looked on at that of the 10th of August, deserved to be overthrown by the same force in June, 1793; and that those who in timidity voted the death of Louis XVI might expect to find in their judges a similar justice and mercy.

[1] They passed the night before their death drinking punch, while the prison echoed with their songs. They went to death at ten o'clock in the morning, all showing great courage, particularly the deputies from Bordeaux. Ducos, who was naturally light-hearted and witty, joked even when putting his head in the guillotine. "It is about time," he said to those around him, "that the convention should decree the inviolability of heads," and just at that moment the axe fell on his. The body of Valazé was put in one of the carts which had brought his unhappy companions to the place of execution, and thrown with them into the same ditch. All the men bore themselves characteristically to the end. The author of these memoirs knew many of them in prison. Carra was fond of diplomatic arguing; the violent Duperret cursed Paris; Brissot always talked of his systems; Ducos wrote songs; Gensonné was very silent; Garlien, who had a beautiful voice, often sang; the abbé Fauchet alone became devout, and continually recited his breviary. — DAUBAN.[d]

Soon after her political friends, the wife of Roland perished on the same scaffold. "O Liberty!" said she, addressing in her dying breath the statue so called, and placed with melancholy irony to preside over the place of execution — "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" Her husband, on learning of her death, stabbed himself. Others of the Gironde were taken at Bordeaux, by this time reduced. Tallien, the proconsul, caused several to be executed amidst the wide proscription and slaughter of their partisans. But space is wanting to enumerate the victims of even this early epoch, when heads fell as yet singly, or but a score at a time, beneath the guillotine. Bailly, however, must not be forgotten — Bailly, the idolised mayor of Paris, whom, by a refinement of cruelty, the mob employed, on the day of his execution, in displacing and dragging his gibbet from one place to another. The old man, as he awaited the executioner, was seen to tremble under his many years and the winter's day. "You tremble, Bailly," sneered one of his guards. "'Tis from cold," replied the aged man.[e]

Robespierre lamented Bailly! "It is thus," exclaimed he at supper with Duplay, "that they will martyrise ourselves." A courtesan died by the side of a sage. The people applauded equally. It had lost all discernment of vice or virtue. Madame du Barry, mistress of Louis XV, died at a short interval from Bailly. Still young at the death of Louis XV, Madame du Barry had been sequestered for some months in a convent, for the sake of decency — a characteristic of the new reign. Soon freed from this confinement, she had lived in a splendid retreat near Paris — the Pavillon de Luciennes — on the borders of the forest of St. Germain. Immense riches, the gifts of Louis XV, rendered her exile almost as brilliant as her reign. Judged and condemned without discussion, shown to the people as one of the stains of the throne, she went to death amidst the yells of the populace. She did not cease to invoke pity, in the most humiliating terms. Tears flowed incessantly from her eyes upon her bosom. Her piercing cries prevailed over the noise of the wheels and the clamour of the multitude. It seemed as if the knife struck this woman beforehand, and deprived her a thousand times of life. "Life! Life!" she cried: "life for my repentance! — Life for all my devotion to the republic! — Life for all my riches to the nation!" The passage of the courtesan to the scaffold was but one lamentation. Under the knife she still wept. She alone, amongst all the women executed, died a coward, because she died neither for opinion, for virtue, nor for love, but for vice. She dishonoured the scaffold as she had dishonoured the throne.[f]

The duke of Orleans, Philippe Egalité, perished also at this epoch. Death-blows were dealt around so thickly that those subject to them gathered courage, like soldiers exposed to the fire of battle. Innocent and guilty braved alike the guillotine with carelessness; some even courted it. Distant spectators, however, shuddered. Terror penetrated into every domicile, and came as a moral medicine to neutralise and arrest that thirst of liberty, the excess of which had produced all these ills.

If the pen shrinks from describing, except by a few strokes, the wholesale murders of the capital, how shall it attempt to portray the massacres in the provinces? If in Paris some discrimination was used, some form observed, in the departments the proconsuls of the convention dispensed with all. Nor could reaction, vengeance, nor security be given as the pretexts; for in the department of the north, where neither resistance nor federation had been manifested, the proscriptions were no less sweeping and severe.[e]

CARLYLE ON THE TERROR

We are now, therefore, got to that black precipitous Abyss; whither all things have long been tending; where, having now arrived on the giddy verge, they hurl down, in confused ruin; headlong, pellmell, down, down; — till Sansculottism have consummated itself; and in this wondrous French Revolution, as in a Doomsday, a World have been rapidly, if not born again, yet destroyed and engulfed. Terror has long been terrible: but to the actors themselves it has now become manifest that their appointed course is one of Terror; and they say, Be it so. "*Que la Terreur soit à l'ordre du jour.*"

So many centuries, say only from Hugh Capet downwards, had been adding together, century transmitting it with increase to century, the sum of Wickedness, of Falsehood, Oppression of man by man. Kings were sinners, and Priests were, and People. Open-Scoundrels rode triumphant, bediademed, becoronetted, bemitred; or the still fataller species of Secret-Scoundrels, in their fair-sounding formulas, speciosities, respectabilities, hollow within: the race of Quacks was grown many as the sands of the sea. Till at length such a sum of Quackery had accumulated itself as, in brief, the Earth and the Heavens were weary of. Slow seemed the Day of Settlement; coming on, all imperceptible, across the bluster and fanfaronade of Courtierisms, Conquering-Heroisms, Most Christian *Grand Monarque*-isms, Well-beloved Pompadourisms: yet behold it was always coming; behold it has come, suddenly, unlooked for by any man! The harvest of long centuries was ripening and whitening so rapidly of late; and now it has grown white, and is reaped rapidly, as it were, in one day. Reaped, in this Reign of Terror; and carried home, to Hades and the Pit! — Unhappy Sons of Adam: it is ever so; and never do they know it, nor will they know it.

Barnave's appearance at the Revolutionary Tribunal was of the bravest; but it could not stead him. And Pétion, once also of the Extreme Left, and named "Pétion Virtue," where is he? Civilly dead; in the Caves of St. Émilion; to be devoured of dogs. And Robespierre, who rode along with him on the shoulders of the people, is in Committee of *Salut;* civilly alive: not to live always. National Deputies not a few! And Generals: the memory of General Custine cannot be defended by his Son; his Son is already guillotined. Custine the Ex-Noble was replaced by Houchard the Plebeian: he too could not prosper in the North; for him too there was no mercy; he has perished in the Place de la Révolution, after attempting suicide in Prison. And Generals Biron, Beauharnais, Brunet, whatsoever General prospers not; tough old Lückner, with his eyes grown rheumy; Alsatian Westermann, valiant and diligent in La Vendée: "none of them can," as the Psalmist sings, "his soul from death deliver."

How busy are the Revolutionary Committees; Sections with their Forty Halfpence a-day! Arrestment on arrestment falls quick, continual; followed by death. Ex-Minister Clavière has killed himself in Prison. Ex-Minister Lebrun, seized in a hayloft, under the disguise of a working man, is instantly conducted to death. Nay, withal, is it not what Barrère calls "coining money on the Place de la Révolution?" For always the "property of the guilty, if property he have," is confiscated. To avoid accidents, we even make a Law that suicide shall not defraud us; that a criminal who kills himself does not the less incur forfeiture of goods. Let the guilty tremble, therefore, and the suspect, and the rich, and in a word all manner of Culottic men! Luxembourg Palace, once Monsieur's, has become a huge loathsome Prison; Chantilly Palace too, once Condé's: — And their Landlords are at Blankenburg,

MADAME ROLAND AT SAINT PÉLAGIE

(From the painting by Carpentier)

[1793-1794 A.D.]

on the wrong side of the Rhine. In Paris are now some Twelve Prisons; in France some Forty-four Thousand; thitherward, thick as brown leaves in Autumn, rustle and travel the suspect; shaken down by Revolutionary Committees, they are swept thitherward, as into their storehouse,—to be consumed by Samson and Tinville. "The Guillotine goes not ill, *La Guillotine ne va pas mal.*"

The suspect may well tremble; but how much more the open rebels;—the Girondin Cities of the South! Revolutionary Army is gone forth, under Ronsin the Playwright; six thousand strong: and has portable guillotines. Representative Carrier has got to Nantes, by the edge of blazing La Vendée, which Rossignol has literally set on fire: Carrier will try what captives you make; his guillotine goes always. Little children are guillotined, and aged men. Swift as the machine is, it will not serve; the Headsman and all his valets sink, worn down with work; declare that the human muscles can no more. Whereupon you must try fusillading; to which perhaps still frightfuller methods may succeed.

In Brest, to like purpose, rules Jean-Bon Saint-André; with an Army of Red Nightcaps. In Bordeaux rules Tallien, with his Isabeau and henchmen; Guadets, Cussys, Salleses, many fall; the bloody Pike and Nightcap bearing supreme sway; the Guillotine coining money. Bristly fox-haired Tallien, once Able Editor, still young in years, is now become most gloomy, potent; a Pluto on Earth, and has the keys of Tartarus.

Maignet, at Orange in the South; Lebon at Arras in the North, become world's wonders. Fouchés, Maignets, Barrases, Frèrons scour the Southern Departments; like reapers, with their guillotine-sickle. Many are the labourers, great is the harvest. By the hundred and the thousand, men's lives are cropt; cast like brands into the burning.

Marseilles is taken, and put under martial law. Low now is Jourdan the Headsman's own head. The other Hundreds are not named. Alas, they, like confused faggots, lie massed together for us; counted by the cart-load: and yet not an individual faggot-twig of them but had a Life and History; and was cut, not without pangs as when a Kaiser dies! Least of all cities can Lyons escapé.[1] Lyons in fact is a Town to be abolished; not Lyons henceforth, but *Commune Affranchie*, "Township Freed": the very name of it shall perish.

Two-hundred and nine men are marched forth over the River, to be shot in mass, by musket and cannon, in the Promenade of the Brotteaux. It is the second of such scenes; the first was of some Seventy. The corpses of the first were flung into the Rhone, but the Rhone stranded some; so these now, of the second lot, are to be buried on land. Their one long grave is dug; they stand ranked, by the loose mould-ridge; the younger of them singing the Marseillaise. Jacobin National Guards give fire; but have again to give fire, and again; and to take the bayonet and the spade, for though the doomed all fall, they do not all die;—and it becomes a butchery too horrible for speech. So that the very Nationals, as they fire, turn away their faces.

And so, over France universally, there is Civic Feast and hightide: and Toulon sees fusillading, grapeshotting in mass, as Lyons saw; and "death is poured out in great floods, *vomie à grands flots.*" Nantes Town is sunk in sleep; but *Représentant* Carrier is not sleeping, the wool-capped Company of Marat is not sleeping. Why unmoors that flat-bottomed craft, that

[1 For a fuller account of the insurrection and fate of Lyons, see the next chapter.]

gabarre; about eleven at night; with Ninety Priests under hatches? They are going to Belle Île? In the middle of the Loire stream, on signal given, the gabarre is scuttled;[1] she sinks with all her cargo. "Sentence of Deportation," writes Carrier, "was executed vertically." The Ninety Priests, with their gabarre-coffin, lie deep! It is the first of the *Noyades*, what we may call "Drownages," of Carrier; which have become famous forever.

Guillotining there was at Nantes, till the Headsman sank worn out: then fusillading "in the Plain of Saint-Mauve"; little children fusilladed, and women with children at the breast; children and women, by the hundred and twenty; and by the five hundred, so hot is La Vendée: till the very Jacobins grew sick, and all but the Company of Marat cried, Hold! Wherefore now we have got Noyading; and on the 24th night of "*Frostarious*," year 2, which is 14th of December 1793, we have a second Noyade: consisting of "a Hundred and Thirty-eight persons."

Or why waste a gabarre, sinking it with them? Fling them out; fling them out, with their hands tied: pour a continual hail of lead over all the space, till the last struggler of them be sunk! And women were in that gabarre; whom the Red Nightcaps were stripping naked; who begged, in their agony, that their smocks might not be stript from them. And young children were thrown in, their mothers vainly pleading: "Wolflings," answered the Company of Marat, "who would grow to be wolves."

By degrees, daylight itself witnesses Noyades: women and men are tied together, feet and feet, hands and hands; and flung in: this they call *Mariage Républicain*, Republican Marriage. Cruel is the panther of the woods, the she-bear bereaved of her whelps: but there is in man a hatred crueller than that. Dumb, out of suffering now, as pale swoln corpses, the victims tumble confusedly seaward along the Loire stream; the tide rolling them back: clouds of ravens darken the River; wolves prowl on the shoal-places.

Carrier writes, "*Quel torrent révolutionnaire*" (What a torrent of Revolution!) For the man is rabid; and the Time is rabid. These are the Noyades of Carrier; twenty-five by the tale, for what is done in darkness comes to be investigated in sunlight:[2] not to be forgotten for centuries. — We will turn to another aspect of the Consummation of Sansculottism; leaving this as the blackest.

But indeed men are all rabid; as the Time is. Representative Lebon, at Arras, dashes his sword into the blood flowing from the Guillotine; exclaims, "How I like it!" Mothers, they say, by his order, have to stand by while the Guillotine devours their children: a band of music is stationed near; and, at the fall of every head, strikes up its *Ça ira*. In the Burgh of Bedouin, in the Orange region, the Liberty-tree has been cut down over night. Representative Maignet, at Orange, hears of it; burns Bedouin Burgh to the last dog-hutch,[3] guillotines the inhabitants, or drives them into the caves and hills. Republic One and Indivisible! *f*

[1 This first *noyade* may be charitably ascribed to accident; but the same excuse cannot be made for those that succeeded. *o*]

[2 The victims of Carrier at Nantes have been set variously between 418 and 8,000; at his trial the majority of witnesses agreed on about 1,800, which may be accepted as the most probable. As to his "republican marriages," when naked couples bound together were thrown into the river, the whole story has been denied; but evidence to that effect was brought against him, when he was recalled and tried for his inhumanity and replaced by mild deputies. Stephens *o* estimates Carrier's total destruction of Nantes people by fusillade and noyade at 5,000 between October, 1793, and February, 1794, — "more than suffered death throughout the whole reign of Terror at Paris."]

[3 According to some writers, though not all, only ten houses were burned at Bedouin.]

THE WORSHIP OF REASON

Of the three institutions which the Revolution desired to modify or destroy — the throne, the nobility, and the religion of the state — there remained standing only the religion of the state, because, taking refuge in conscience, and amalgamating itself with the very idea, it was impossible for its persecutors to follow it so far. The civil constitution of the clergy; the oath imposed upon the priests; that oath declared schism by the court of Rome; the retractations which the mass of the priests had made of this oath to remain attached to the Catholic centre; the expulsion of these refractory priests from their presbyteries and their churches; the installation of a national and republican clergy in the place of these faithful ministers to Rome; the persecution against these rebel ecclesiastics to the law, for remaining obedient to the faith, their imprisonment, their proscription, *en masse*, on board the vessels of the republic at Rochefort — all these quarrels, all this violence, all these exiles, all these executions, and all these martyrdoms of Catholic priests, had swept away in appearance the ancient worship from the face of the republic. The constitutional worship — a palpable inconsequence of sworn priests, who exercised a pretended Catholicism in spite of the spiritual chief of Catholicism, was nothing more than a sacred toy which the convention had left to the country people in order not to destroy their customs too suddenly. But the impatient philosophers of the convention, of the Jacobins, and of the commune, felt indignant at this resemblance to religion, which survived, in the eyes of the people, religion itself. The greater number openly proclaimed atheism as the only doctrine worthy of intrepid spirits in the material logic of the period.

The leaders of the commune, and above all Chaumette and Hébert, encouraged in the people these seditions against all worship. They demanded brilliant apostacies from the priests, and often obtained them. Some ecclesiastics, many under the empire of fear, others from real incredulity, ascended the chair to declare that they had been until then impostors. Acclamations awaited these renegades from the altar. The once sacred ceremonies were derisively parodied. They dressed an ox or an ass in pontifical ornaments; they paraded these through the streets; they drank wine from the chalice, and shut the church. They wrote upon the gate of the place of the sepulchre, *sommeil éternel* (eternal rest). In a few months the immense *matériel* of Catholic worship — cathedrals, churches, monasteries, presbyteries, towers, belfries, ministers, and ceremonies — had disappeared. They desired to possess themselves of the temples, to offer them a new worship, a kind of renewed paganism, whose dogmas were but images, whose adoration was but a ceremonial, and whose divinity supreme was but Reason become in its own person its own God, and adoring itself in its attributes. The laws of the convention, which continued to salary the national Catholic worship, opposed themselves to this violent invasion of this philosophical religion of Chaumette in the cathedral and in the churches of Paris. It was incumbent to cause these ancient buildings to be evacuated by a voluntary renunciation of the constitutional bishop and his clergy. An equivalent salary was assured to the principals amongst them, or more lucrative functions in the civil and military administrations of the republic. Hope and threats wrung from them their resignation.

Chaumette exclaimed that the day when Reason resumed her empire merited a place to itself in the epochs of the Revolution. He demanded that the committee of Public Instruction should bestow in the new calendar a

place to the "Day of Reason." This abdication of exterior Catholicism by the priests of a nation surrounded for so many ages by the power of this worship, is one of the most characteristic acts of the spirit of the Revolution. The bells, those sonorous voices of Christian temples, were cast into money or cannon. The directors of the departments forbade the institutors to pronounce the name of God in their tuition to the children of the people. The commune desired to replace the ceremonies of religion by other spectacles, to which the people flocked as they do to all novel sights. But religions do not spring up in the market-place at the voice of legislators or demagogues. The religion of Chaumette and the commune was merely a popular opera transferred from the theatre to the tabernacle.

The 20th of December, the day fixed for the installation of the new worship, the commune, the convention, and the authorities of Paris, went in a body to the cathedral. Chaumette, seconded by Laïs, an actor at the opera, had arranged the plan of the *fête*. Mademoiselle Maillard, an actress, in the full bloom of youth and talent, formerly a favourite of the queen, and high in popular admiration, had been compelled by Chaumette's threats to play the part of the divinity of the people. She entered borne on a palanquin, the seat of which was formed of oak branches. Women dressed in white, and wearing tri-coloured girdles, preceded her. Popular societies, fraternal female societies, revolutionary committees, sections, groups of choristers, singers, and opera dancers encircled the throne. With the theatrical cothurni on her feet, a Phrygian cap on her head, her frame scarcely covered with a white tunic, over which a flowing cloak of sky-blue was thrown, the priestess was borne, at the sound of instruments, to the foot of the altar, and placed on the spot where the adoration of the faithful so lately sought the mystic bread transformed into a divinity. Behind her was a vast torch, emblematical of the light of philosophy, destined henceforward to be the sole flame of the interior of these temples. The actress lighted this flambeau. Chaumette, receiving the *encensoir*, in which the perfume was burning, from the hands of the two acolytes, knelt, and waved it in the air. A mutilated statue of the Virgin was lying at his feet. Chaumette apostrophised the marble, and defied it to resume its place in the respect of the people. Dances and hymns attracted the eyes and ears of the spectators. No profanation was wanting in the old temple whose foundations were confounded with the foundations of religion and the monarchy. Forced by terror to be present at this *fête*, Bishop Gobel was there, in a tribune, at this parody of the mysteries which three days before he had celebrated at the same altar. Motionless from fear, tears of shame rolled down the bishop's cheeks.

A similar worship was imitated in all the churches throughout the departments. The light surface of France bent before every wind from Paris. Only instead of divinities borrowed from the theatres, the representatives in mission compelled modest wives and innocent young maidens to display themselves to the adoration of the public in these spectacles. The devastation of sanctuaries, and the dispersion of relics, followed the inauguration of the allegorical worship of Chaumette.[g]

FALL OF THE HÉBERTISTS (1794 A.D.)

In the meantime, the victorious Jacobins were about to split into two contending parties. But first let us regard a picture of the convention at present, drawn by one of its members, Thibaudeau:[h] "The national convention itself was no longer aught than a nominal representation, than a passive

instrument of terror. On the ruins of its independence was raised that monstrous dictatorship, called the committee of Public Safety. Terror isolated and struck with stupor the deputies as much as the mass of citizens. On entering the assembly, each member, full of mistrust, governed his words and demeanour, lest either should be construed into a crime. Nothing was indifferent — the place one sat on, a gesture, a look, a murmur, a smile. The highest bench of the Mountain marking the highest degree of republicanism, all pressed towards it; the right side remaining deserted since the fall of the Gironde. Those who had voted with that party, and had too much conscience to become Jacobins, took refuge in the Plain, ever ready to receive those who sought safety in inaction. Other members, more pusillanimous, still assumed no fixed place, but changed continually, seeking thus to deceive and baffle suspicion. Some, still more cunning, in the fear of being compromised, never sat down at all, but remained standing at the foot of the tribune. On trying occasions, when there was repugnance to vote for a violent measure, and danger to oppose it, they escaped by stealth from the assembly."

The trying moment for a revolutionary party is when it has conquered, and essays to govern. The followers and the weapons, which have hitherto aided it in crushing and overthrowing, prove most unmanageable instruments of administration. When the Girondists had conquered royalty, and found themselves possessed of the ministry and the majority of the convention, they sought to stop the revolutionary current by the force of reason, of eloquence, and of law. All had proved unavailing. Still the never-failing rule held good, that a party more extreme than the government exists of necessity, however popular and extreme that government.

The anarchical party now formed itself in what had ever been the most violent furnace of the Revolution, the Cordelier club, of the men whom even Marat had denounced, but who had nevertheless been the most violent agitators of the 31st of May. When the all-levelling constitution of 1793 was proposed, the anarchists found it not democratical enough, and petitioned accordingly. When it was set aside, and the committee of Public Safety installed with dictatorial power in its place, the anarchists demanded the constitution. Whilst Robespierre defended the government of the day against the violent opposition, he was at the same time menaced by another, the moderates, who thought that blood enough had been shed, and that measures of vengeance or rigour were no longer necessary. This party, which already began to lean to the side of humanity, was unfortunately brought thither by no honourable path. It was formed of successful plunderers — of those who had enriched themselves in the Revolution, who loved pleasure and tranquillity, and who thought the time was come for enjoyment. These were necessarily few. The great and famishing mass of the undistinguished and uninvited pressed on their rear, demanded the continuance of the revolutionary times and habits, and exclaimed against moderatism as their ruin. This was the sentiment of the Jacobin club, and of the talking majority of the public.

Robespierre could not but adopt and lead this opinion, the Jacobins being his true support, the chief source of his popularity as a demagogue. But then, as a member of the government, he had to repress the anarchists; and the difficulty was to refute them, and repulse, without incurring the suspicion of moderatism. This position was dangerous, betwixt the two parties. If the anarchists succeeded in proving him moderate to the Jacobins, he was lost; and he was wise enough to see that the moderates had no force or class on whom they could rely, and that to rely on them would be to lean on a broken

reed. The subtle tyrant, therefore, whilst obliged to denounce and menace the anarchists, cleansed himself from the crime of moderation by enforcing measures of blood and keeping the guillotine in action; and at the same time he prepared the means, and watched the opportunity, of delivering himself from the dilemma by the ruin of both parties.

Danton wanted his colleague's acuteness and his perseverance. He was one of those sated revolutionists who wished to stop the effusion of blood. He knew his eloquence or influence was as yet unequal to the task: he therefore, rather than imitate Robespierre in indulging the sanguinary feeling of the time, thought it best to retire to the country, and wait till the revolutionary fury had ebbed, and humanity began to flow — a feeling fatal to him, and most advantageous to Robespierre; thus ridding the latter of a formidable rival.

Previous to the secession of Danton, the anarchists had recourse to the singular manœuvre of the Feast of Reason. Robespierre, Danton, the convention itself, had blushed at such a scene: shame made even them recoil.

Soon after broke out the quarrel between the moderates and the anarchists, which enabled Robespierre and his committee, placed between them, to crush both in succession. The moderate party has been represented as composed principally of successful plunderers, of wealthy fortunate men, desirous of enjoying their spoils. There were others, however, moderate from honest indignation. One of these, Philippeau, in the blindness of zeal, began the attack upon those moderate from corruption, by proposing an inquest into the fortunes and dilapidations of the deputies. Philippeau here lifted the axe that was to fall upon his own head. Bazire and Chabot, the Jacobins who had grown tender-hearted because gorged with plunder, defended themselves, and exclaimed against denunciations, "Let us not decimate and devour each other. Already the royalists exult in our destruction; they see us sending each other to the scaffold. 'To-day,' say they, 'tis Danton's turn, then Billaud's, last Robespierre's. Let us pass a law that no deputy shall be arrested, at least until heard." This decree passed. The anarchists exclaimed against it; the Jacobins joined them; and a complete outcry was raised against the moderates. The rabble were in want of victims. The royalists, constitutionalists, Girondists, had all perished. The source that supplied the guillotine was running dry, when the moderates were presented as the victims of popular vengeance.

Robespierre had here the wit to perceive that the current was setting in the wrong direction, and moreover the courage to resist and turn it right. The Revolution, in his idea, had descended far enough; he wished that it should continue indeed, but on a level, not a downward course. He therefore set his face against the anarchists, thundered against Hébert, and boldly attacked the commune, which he accused of setting up a new and aristocratic religion. "Atheism," said Robespierre, "is aristocratic; it is the natural religion of the lazy and the rich. On the contrary, the belief in a deity is a popular, a universal belief, moreover a necessary one. If God did not exist, we should invent him."

Hébert, Chaumette, and the commune, intimidated by the apostrophes of Robespierre, drew back, recanted their atheism, and abolished their worship of Reason. But at the same time they vented their spleen by redoubled attacks upon the moderates, with whom they implicated Danton. Whilst the anarchists in the municipality thus quailed, the original and more active agitators in the Cordelier club showed more stubbornness. Ronsin and Rossignol, generals of the party, who had commanded with all brutality

in La Vendée, were accused by Philippeau and put in arrest. To show its impartiality, the government at the same time arrested those of the moderates who were accused of embezzlement and corruption. The parties now became declared. The anarchists exclaimed against the counter-revolutionists, as they called the moderates, and, through the medium of Hébert's Journal, the *Père Duchesne*, cast upon them all every kind of calumny and abuse. They accused Danton as a rank moderate; nor did that personage deny, though he avoided to admit the truth of the accusation. Camille Desmoulins, the friend of Danton, the very man who began the Revolution by grasping his pistols on the news of Necker's dismissal, and mounting on a table in the Palais Royal to proclaim the necessity of immediate and open resistance — he too was a moderate, and now commenced a journal, which he called the *Vieux Cordelier*, in opposition to Hébert.

Nought is more surprising in the Revolution than the talents which it actually gave, rather than excited in men who, even in its stirring commencement, might be and were universally classed with the dull. We have seen Robespierre become even eloquent by dint of habit, by position, by the times, and the opinions which he represented; and now we find in the vulgar ringleader of riot, in Desmoulins, a suavity and refinement blended with force, a power of writing, in short, that the most cultivated age cannot exceed. The pretended translation of Tacitus, in which he depicts the tyranny of the convention, is a *chef d'œuvre* of its kind. His apostrophes against Hébert unite to Vergniaud's warmth a contemptuous irony unsurpassed in the warfare of the pen.

Both parties were summoned to the Jacobins, as to the bar of public opinion. Both pleaded their cause; and Robespierre, contented at first with the injuries inflicted by their mutual accusation on the characters of each, silenced the quarrel for the time. He let loose the anarchists: they instantly fell to vapouring and plotting. The members of the committee of Public Safety appeared to them imbecile sovereigns, and the whole system perplexed and complicated. They imagined a simple form of government, consisting of a general and a judge, both with dictatorial power. A revolutionist at that time saw but two administrative functions and necessities, of fighting foreign enemies and beheading domestic foes, the latter to be designated by interest or humour. With these ideas the anarchists tried every means of raising an insurrection. They accused the convention of the public scarcity, of all existing ills. They already had acquired the majority in one section; and the commune, or its magistrates, Hébert and Chaumette, supported them, though with hesitation. They proceeded, by the dissemination of small pamphlets and placards in the markets and other populous quarters, to stir up the people against the convention. But it was no longer an irresolute party, a feeble ministry, and the name of law which reigned. A committee in the assembly was appointed to take their writings into consideration; and on the morrow all the leading anarchists were arrested. With Ronsin and Vincent, vapourers and soldiers, were taken Chaumette, the apostle of Reason, Hébert, the infamous insulter of the dying queen — how they were welcomed by the population of the prisons! — the apostate archbishop Gobel, and Anacharsis Clootz.[e]

The manner in which they were arrested forced them into the ranks of ordinary thieves, from whence only a revolution could extricate them. They appeared before that revolutionary tribunal from whence they had once condemned hundreds to die. The crime of which they were accused was

counter-revolution. They were represented as foreign agents. The perusal of this extraordinary trial gives no proof whatever of this last imputation.

On the 1st Germinal (March 24th), Hébert was sent to his death, and with him perished many of his accomplices. Among these were Ronsin, general in the revolutionary army, Anacharsis Clootz, deputy to the national convention (an atrocious maniac, who claimed the title of Orator of Mankind, and who constantly spoke of making known to all nations liberty, atheism, and *Septembrisation*, a terrible word of his own coining), Vincent, general of the War department, Proly, Pereyra, and Dubuisson (the three commissioners who had denounced Dumouriez). The rest were more obscure, but no less guilty. The people, crowding to witness their punishment, overwhelmed them with insults, and particularly delighted in tormenting Hébert by applying to him those odious jests by which he designated the guillotine.

THE FALL OF DANTON

This victory alarmed those who had obtained it. The joy expressed by the people was a terrible presage of the intoxication with which their own punishment would one day be contemplated. Danton and Camille Desmoulins were not allowed to congratulate themselves for long upon having accomplished the downfall of these dangerous anarchists. On the night of the 10th–11th Germinal they were arrested, and with them, their colleagues Lacroix, Philippeau, Hérault de Séchelles, and General Westermann. The following day the convention was much agitated. Legendre, a friend of Danton and Camille, tried to rally their trembling friends. He showed them a similar fate awaiting them — the merited consequence of their cowardly silence; at first his protestation received marked approval from the Mountain. Then the members of the committee of Public Safety appeared, with lagging footsteps, composed bearing, brave but treacherous glances. Legendre seemed affected and stopped. "Have done," said Robespierre to him coldly, "it is well for us to know all the accomplices of the traitors and conspirators we have arrested." After this remark there was not one man who dared support Legendre. Saint-Just ascended the tribune; the revolutionists never gave vent to more reckless absurdities than when engaged in what they termed acts of accusation.[1] Saint-Just surpassed all that had ever been heard hitherto in this respect. It was a picture of all the factions the Revolution had given birth to; the secret ties that united them were herein so depicted that Saint-Just portrayed perfect harmony between Danton, directing the massacres of September 2nd, and the victims of those fatal days; between Danton and the Girondists, of whose condemnation he had been the cause; between Danton and the Hébertists whom he had defied. Comparisons as ridiculous as these weakened anything the speaker had to say of the liaisons of Danton and the Orleanist party.

Robespierre then spoke to show that from henceforth he reigned without

[1 Dizziness begins when the Jacobins lay hands on Danton. To what blindness absolute power has condemned them, when they refuse to see that they themselves are beginning to totter! All that hatred and gullibility can heap together forms the basis of Saint-Just's charges. He reiterates what he has so many times said, and always to the end of encompassing the death of his revolutionary accomplices. His deliberate fury unites itself with literary research. In denouncing Danton he calls to mind Cicero's philippics against Antony. This rhetoric, which never deserts the chief Jacobins, contributes, no less than do their passions, to blind them. The tenacity in destroying those who shield them is as tragic as anything in history. Saint-Just does not utter a single word that does not react upon himself; the accuser condemns himself. In hustling Danton on to the scaffold he mounts its first steps. Gloom accumulates. In this cloud the ruin of all is to be consummated. Saint-Just's discourse is a long, blind suicide. — QUINET.?]

a rival. His triumph was tinged with a sullen uneasiness. Of all the enemies he had overthrown, Danton was the only one who could leave implacable avengers. Robespierre saw consternation reigning over all the Mountain. He foresaw that he would be forced again to decimate his former soldiery. Would it again stand slaughter without seeking to defend itself? The Revolution, Robespierre and Saint-Just announced, would henceforth assume a different aspect. "That our friends, that our enemies may learn," they said, "that terror and virtue are the order of the day." Thereby they emphasised their intention that austerity, temperance, and disinterestedness should from that time be exacted from the assassins. By this declaration they further intimidated and subjugated their agents; Robespierre must be imitated in all things, most particularly in his hypocrisy — and Robespierre was adored.

The trial of Danton and his colleagues was conducted by the revolutionary tribunal with the same forms they themselves had created to hasten the condemnation of the Girondists. Danton began his defence, and his introduction indicated the hope of at least involving the treacherous Robespierre in his downfall. The president of the tribunal closed his lips by repeatedly telling him that he had strayed from the point. Then began a stormy scene, the president's bell, the cries of his lictors, the voice of Danton, and the murmurs of the people made a horrible tumult.[1] The accused insulted their judges. Fouquier-Tinville wrote to the convention that they were in a state of open rebellion; the convention issued a decree to immediately terminate the disputes. The accused were all condemned and not one of them had been heard. Little more than their names and their dwelling-places had been asked them. Danton answered, "My dwelling-place will soon be nothingness, my name is written in the Pantheon of history." Camille Desmoulins, questioned as to his age, replied, "I am the same age as the sansculotte Jesus, thirty-three years at the time of his death." Hérault de Séchelles said, "I will sit in that same room wherein I was cursed by the parliamentarians."

The people witnessed their punishment without joy, even with some indications of sorrow. Danton maintained his terrible language to the end; it is said that he repeated several times, "I will drag Robespierre with me, he will follow me." Desmoulins testified regret at having called upon vengeance too often, and upon humanity too late.[i]

Danton and Desmoulins! the one who began the Revolution, the other who accomplished it on the 10th of August! Well might it be said that the Revolution, like Saturn, produced its children but to devour them. Desmoulins had called himself the *procureur général de la lanterne*. He died almost

[1 Danton spoke with the windows open; his last roars were to resound in public places, even on the quays beyond the Seine, a thing incredible if so much testimony did not forbid one to doubt it. In moments of crisis, we know of what startling silences a town like Paris is capable; the whole town held its breath to hear the last words of the tribune. His sentences, sometimes entire, sometimes mutilated, were secretly expounded by that multitude afraid of itself. Nobody dared deny or approve, not knowing but that the accused might in a little while become the accuser. For half a day, Danton's railing was to find its way to the people assembled in the neighbouring places; the judges did not feel equal to maintaining themselves against such an assault on the succeeding days. Fouquier-Tinville, at bay, demanded of the convention to protect him against the virulence of the Dantonists. To this Saint-Just replied — he never showed himself so cruel — "Let the accused be excluded from debate." He obtained acquiescence even from the friends of Danton, glad and willing to give this hostage to the menace of the exterminator. Camille Desmoulins had prepared a defence which he was forbidden to read; he tore it to pieces with a frenzied laugh and hurled it in the faces of the judges and jury; thus it was preserved. Taken back to prison, we hear of no enthusiastic speeches such as those attributed to the last night of the Girondins. Indignity, fury, mistrust, insulting laughter, occupied their last moments. —QUINET.?]

unmanned by the thoughts of a young and loving wife, who underwent a similar fate. Danton, at the foot of the scaffold, was prevented by the executioner from embracing his friend Hérault. "Go, churl! you can't at least prevent our heads from embracing in yon sack. One thing consoles me; 'tis that Robespierre follows us. Why should I regret to die? I have enjoyed the Revolution, have spent, have drunk, have debauched. Let us go to slumber." Such were amongst the last, and with his life but too consistent words of Danton.[1] What an epoch, when such men of blood were doomed to endanger themselves in invoking clemency, and perish in the cause of humanity!

Now that the leaders of the Revolution were punished with death for lack of honesty or zeal, it seemed unjust and inconsistent to allow any holding by the least tie to aristocracy and the ancient government to live. All the relics of noble families were now sacrificed. The duke de Chastellet, the marshals de Noailles and de Mailly, men of eighty years, too aged to emigrate; the dukes de Béthune and de Villeroi; many of the members of the old magistracy; Malesherbes, the defender of Louis, all his family, his children and grandchildren, perished together. Men were wanting, and the rage of the Terrorists vented itself upon women, who perished at this epoch in greater numbers than the other sex. The duchess de Grammont, who recalls the memory of Louis XV, survived to die on the scaffold of the Revolution. The wives of the condemned were always included in the sentence. One day saw a troop of girls proceed to die for having made a cockade or carolled an imprudent air; the next, an establishment of nuns, or a crowd of poor peasant women from La Vendée, tied and heaped in carts, like calves, and ignorant of their guilt and their fate, stupefied with fear, as they went to slaughter. The princess Elizabeth, sister of Louis, made at this time one of a devoted batch, and perished almost unnoticed. The inhabitants of the streets through which these daily processions passed became at length disgusted, and dared to show it by shutting their shops. The scaffold was, in consequence, removed to the opposite extremity of Paris; not, however, relaxing its activity.

ROBESPIERRE RECOGNISES A SUPREME BEING (JUNE 8TH, 1794)

Robespierre and the Jacobins forming the sovereign committee had again triumphed. They had anticipated both anarchists and moderates, and stricken each party ere it had gathered strength. But, without enemies, how was this knot of rulers to remain united? Robespierre could alone pretend to govern. In him popularity was concentrated. The Jacobins were at his command; and he now got possession of the municipal power, by appointing a new mayor and a commander of the armed force, Henriot, who was devoted to him. Couthon, and Saint-Just, his colleagues in the committee, were personally attached to Robespierre: Barrère feared him. Carnot, Prieur, and Lindet affected to occupy themselves with merely the details of government, leaving the high influence to their brethren. Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes were jealous of Robespierre: they looked upon him as a moderate in heart, as a man who wished to stop the Revolution, not to continue it, like them. They were right. Robespierre saw plainly that the power of the committee could not endure. Popularity with the mere mob was too uncertain a support; and terror, though a powerful chain, might soon be strained to cracking. He looked around, he thought, he studied, and to excite some new fanaticism seemed to him the only measure of consolidating power, and concentrating it in his proper person. He meditated the life of Mohammed, and that of Cromwell. To found a new sect became his policy and his ambition. Nor was the aim an ill-judged one, save that the character and genius of the man were most unfit for the task.

[1] So passes, like a gigantic mass of valour, ostentation, fury, affection and wild revolutionary force and manhood, this Danton to his unknown home. He had many sins; but one worst sin he had not, that of cant; with all his dross he was a Man; fiery-real, from the great fire-bosom of Nature herself, he walked straight his own wild road, whither it led him. — CARLYLE.*f*]

He commenced by making the convention decree the existence of a supreme being. Some time after [May 7th, 1794] the same authority ordained a *fête* in honour of the Deity. Robespierre caused himself to be chosen president of the convention for the day, and by consequence high priest of the ceremonial. David, as usual, was intrusted with the arrangement of worship and procession. An amphitheatre was erected in the gardens of the Tuileries; opposite to which divers wooden figures were erected, representing Atheism, Discord, etc. A statue of Wisdom, in marble, was concealed by three figures. After having then made the convention and the votaries of the new worship wait for him, Robespierre appeared, magnificently dressed, plumed, and robed, bearing flowers and ears of corn in his hand. After music and a speech he came forward, set fire to Atheism and Discord, the flames and smoke of which, however, so besmutted poor Wisdom that the congregation could not refrain from a laugh, whilst the more devout called the circumstance an evil omen. The day was beautiful, being the 8th of June, 1794. Robespierre himself was elated. He even smiled, and wore a radiant countenance. In the procession from the Tuileries to the Champ-de-Mars, inebriated with triumph, he forgot himself so far as to walk alone far in advance of the convention; many of whose members forgot their customary prudence likewise, and in lieu of incense, saluted the high priest with imprecations. "The Capitol is near the Tarpeian rock," said they. He was called Pisistratus, and bade beware a tyrant's fate.

A COALITION AGAINST ROBESPIERRE

The odium and jealousies excited against Robespierre by this betrayal of ambition, were counterbalanced at this time by attempts made to assassinate him and Collot d'Herbois. Scenes of enthusiastic sympathy and favour towards him took place at the Jacobins', and emboldened him to follow up his aim of supremacy. Inferior to the committee of Public Safety was the committee of General Surety, charged chiefly with the administration of police. From hence went forth all accusations and arrests tantamount to condemnation, which heretofore the commune had issued, but which authority had been transferred to the convention. The members of this inferior committee were ruffians. One of their freaks was to send to the scaffold the poor keeper of a tavern where they dined, in order to astonish him, and observe how he would look mounting the scaffold in his white apron.

Either these acts disgusted Robespierre, or their encroachments gave him umbrage. He accordingly opened a bureau, or office of police, in the committee of Public Safety itself, where he himself sat, thus superseding the inferior committee in their functions. They became his enemies in consequence, and leagued with Collot d'Herbois, and Billaud-Varennes, to thwart and overthrow him. Robespierre's mania for becoming prophet soon afforded

them the opportunity they sought. There was in Paris, at that time, a woman either persuaded or pretending that she was to give birth to a Saviour. Her name was Catherine Théot, and she called herself the mother of God. A certain Don Gerle, who had been a monk, was her prophet; only her second prophet, however — Robespierre was the first. The extent of the arch-Jacobin's connection with this woman is not known. Perhaps he was merely flattered by the divine honours reserved for him; perhaps he hoped to turn his prophetship to political advantage. Certain it is that he gave to Don Gerle a certificate of civism, then a passport of protection, signed with his own hand; and letters were found from Catherine Théot addressed to him. The committee of public safety caused the arrest of the pretended mother of God and her congregation. Robespierre in vain interfered to release them and stop their trial. Vadier was employed to draw up a report, in which he adroitly accused Robespierre, though not by name, of having been a convert to such absurd and dangerous superstitions.

JEAN LAMBERT TALLIEN
(1769-1820)

Already, since the day of the *fête* to the Supreme Being, there had been skirmishes in the convention between Robespierre and some of the old Mountainists, who showed an inclination to form an opposition. Amongst them were Bourdon, Tallien, Fouché, Barras. With these now united the malcontents of the two committees. The report of Vadier was publicly read, despite the efforts of Robespierre. He retired indignant from the convention and the committee; thus imitating the false step of Danton, and leaving his friends, Couthon and Saint-Just, to strive alone against Collot, Billaud-Varennes, and Barrère. In the Jacobins, however, Robespierre continued still paramount. Possessed of them, the organ of popularity, and the municipal force under Henriot, he thought he might defy the convention. He retired from it, meaning thereby to convey a warning and a menace. But convention and committee continued their labour, the party in opposition gathering numbers, consistency, and force for the struggle that was approaching. The Jacobin tyrant was reported to demand the heads of half the assembly, and much more than half were terrified in consequence, and alarmed into resistance. He took counsel with his immediate friends. The more furious pressed him to seize his antagonists on his own individual authority. But this appeared to him too bold a step; it would alienate the armies. An insurrection in form, another 31st of May, appeared the preferable mode. But it was his hope to obviate even the necessity of this insurrection by intimidation.

The Jacobins were accordingly worked up to a proper pitch of excitement, and on the 25th of July, the 7th Thermidor, a menacing petition — a similar one had preceded the 31st of May — was presented to the convention. It was received in silence. The members feared alike to reprobate or applaud. On the following day, Robespierre appeared, ascended the tribune, and developed in a speech of many hours the conduct of his whole political life, his aims, his wrongs, his forbearance towards the convention, but at the same time his determination to uphold the Revolution. In plain language, what he meant to utter was this: I am in a minority, both in the legislature, and the government, and the convention, and the committees. Restore to me my influence, or ——

There ensued a considerable tumult in the assembly. Billaud-Varennes and Vadier each defended himself. Panis accused Robespierre of preparing lists of proscriptions in the Jacobin club, more especially against Fouché. Bourdon at length proposed, instead of ordering the speech to be printed, to refer it to the committees. "That is, to my enemies," exclaimed the dictator. "Name them whom you accuse," was the reply; in other words, "Tell us how many heads you demand." Had Robespierre had the courage at this moment to designate a dozen of his enemies, and prove at the same time his cordiality with the rest, the twelve would most probably have been sacrificed, and the tyrant still upheld in his reign. He refused to name his victims; and as each believed himself on the fatal list, the only safety was in resistance.

THE 9TH THERMIDOR AND ROBESPIERRE'S FALL

The morrow, 9th Thermidor, proved decisive. The night was spent by both parties in making preparations for the struggle. When the sitting opened, Saint-Just got possession of the tribune, and, under pretence of reading a report, commenced a denunciation. He had already uttered the name of Tallien, when that deputy rose to order, asserting that Saint-Just, having not consulted with the committee, had no right to read the report. "Let us at once tear asunder the veil," said Tallien, commencing his attack. But Billaud-Varennes, as member of the committee, and more entitled than Tallien to denounce, interrupted Tallien, and assumed the lead against Robespierre. He told the assembly that the Jacobins had sworn yesterday to slaughter the convention, and that their only hope consisted in firmness. He then launched out into a ferocious philippic against Robespierre, who rushed to the tribune to answer. But universal cries of "Down with the tyrant!" drowned his voice, and prevented him from being heard. Tallien succeeded Billaud-Varennes already triumphant. The refusal to hear Robespierre presaged his fall. "Yesterday," said Tallien, "I was present at the meeting of the Jacobins, and I shuddered for my country. There I saw forming the army of the new Cromwell, and I armed myself with a poniard to pierce his breast [Tallien showed the weapon] in case that the convention had not the courage to pass the decree of accusation." Tallien then proposed the arrest of Henriot, and that the assembly should sit in permanence until the menaced insurrection was put down, and the guilty seized. This passed with acclamation.

Robespierre, at the foot of the tribune all this time, tried to gain possession of it, begged to be heard, and foamed at the mouth in the frenzy of exertion and despair. But the assembly would not hear him. Barrère at length got up. It is said that he had in his pocket two speeches, one for, one against Robespierre. Seeing the state of feeling, he produced and spoke

the latter. It defended the committees, and accused the tyrant. Tallien again followed.

It is remarkable that, in all this rage, this ample theme of denunciation against so manifest a tyrant, there was no eloquence, no overwhelming force of accusation. As guilty themselves as Robespierre, Billaud-Varennes and Tallien dared not tax him with his crimes. The fears of the convention, however, gave it energy. They dreaded even to listen to Robespierre, lest they should be more awed by his voice than by his vengeance. In vain he asked to be heard. He turned to all sides of the assembly; clamours answered him. "President of assassins," cried he, "for the last time I ask liberty to speak." His voice and strength here failed him. "The blood of Danton stifles thee," observed a member. "Ha! 'tis Danton you would avenge," replied he, snatching at the least advantage. His arrest was now unanimously decreed. Robespierre the younger started up, and demanded to be included in the decree; Couthon, Saint-Just, and Lebas were also added. They were ordered to the bar, and descended with imprecations; but not a huissier, or officer of the house, could be found bold enough to take the dreaded men into arrest. At length some gendarmerie were procured to take charge of them.

PAUL JEAN FRANÇOIS NICOLAS, COMTE DE BARRAS
(1755-1825)

The debate had lasted all day, and the arrest was not pronounced till evening. The mayor and commune remained in suspense, but Henriot collected his gendarmerie, and refused to obey the order of the convention depriving him of the command. The keepers of the several prisons were in the same interest; they refused to receive the arrested members, who were rescued and conveyed to the Hôtel-de-Ville. Thus were the two rival powers each in its headquarters — the convention at the Tuileries, Robespierre and his friends at the commune. Each was in possession of a certain part of the armed force; but so feeble, that it seemed impossible to strike a decisive blow on that night. Robespierre was grievously disappointed in finding that the rabble had not flocked to his standard. Henriot tried in vain to raise the faubourgs; but this could only be done by a certain low class of agitators, such as the anarchists and the Cordelier club united and held in pay. In crushing these, Robespierre had destroyed the instruments, and the officers in fact, of insurrection, and no aid was hence to be obtained. Here then was his blunder. In ruining the mob party he had cut away his own support. The commune, however, had some reliance on the sections, and the national guard attached to them. But the convention, despatching two of its members to each section, proved more active than the commune, or than Robespierre, who was stupefied rather than excited to exertion by this his final peril. Henriot, too, was an unfit, a drunken commander. He had been seized in the evening at the palace of the convention, and afterwards liber-

ROBESPIERRE FACING HIS CAPTORS
(From the painting by Wertz)

[1794 A.D.]

ated by his friends. His approach had thrown the assembly into a panic, and they had voted to die at their posts. On recovering from their fears they appointed Barras general, and other deputies to act under his command. The sections answered the appeal of the convention. None but the cannoniers adhered to the commune; and these were shaken in their firmness by emissaries who penetrated amongst them, and acquainted them with the decree outlawing the Robespierres and their party. The apathy of the populace, the want of spirit in the leaders, who scarcely showed themselves, but remained in secret and irresolute council, contributed to the defection of the cannoniers, the greater part of whom drew off at length, and abandoned the Hôtel-de-Ville. Thus, about midnight, when the force under the orders of the convention surrounded the hôtel and occupied the place, there was scarcely a sign of resistance. Even within the doors, in the mansion and stronghold of the commune, there was as little opposition. A few gendarmes were able to make their way up the staircases, and to surprise the conspirators.[e]

At the sound of approaching footsteps, Lebas, armed with a brace of pistols, had presented one to Robespierre, conjuring him to put a period to his existence; but Robespierre, in conjunction with Saint-Just and Couthon, refused to commit suicide, preferring to die by the hand of their enemies. Sitting mute and motionless around a table in the Salle de l'Égalité, they listened to the sound of persons ascending to their apartment, kept their eyes fixed on the door, and awaited their fate.

As the jingling noise proceeding from the arms carried by the advancing men became too distinct to be misunderstood, Lebas discharged a pistol through his heart, and fell dead in the arms of Robespierre the younger, who, although equally certain of his innocence and of being acquitted, did not choose to survive his brother or his friend. Opening a window, he leaped out into the court, and broke his leg. Coffinhal, making the chambers and lobbies resound with his imprecations and hurried tread, chanced to encounter Henriot, stupefied with terror and wine; bitterly reproaching him for his gross and cowardly conduct, he seized him in his arms, carried him towards an open window, and threw him from the second floor on to a heap of ordure. "Lie there, wretched drunkard," cried Coffinhal as he flung him down. "You are not worthy to die on a scaffold!" Meanwhile Dulac apprised Bourdon of the free access to the Hôtel-de-Ville.

Léonard Bourdon ascended, accompanied by five gendarmes and a detachment of soldiers. Dulac having joined him, the whole party rushed eagerly towards the Salle de l'Égalité. The door soon yielded to the blows given by the soldiers with the butt-ends of their muskets, amid the cries of "Down with the tyrant!" "Which is he?" inquired the soldiers; but Léonard Bourdon durst not meet the look of his fallen enemy. Standing a little behind the men, and hidden by the body of a gendarme, named Méda, with his right hand he seized the arm of the gendarme, who held a pistol, and pointing with his left hand to the person to be aimed at, he directed the muzzle of the weapon towards Robespierre, exclaiming, "That is the man." The man fired, and the head of Robespierre dropped on the table, deluging with blood the proclamation he had not finished signing. The ball had entered the left side of his face, and carried away several of his teeth. Couthon, endeavouring to rise upon his withered limbs, staggered and fell under the table. Saint-Just remained sitting immovable at the table, now gazing mournfully on Robespierre, now casting proud looks of defiance at his enemies.

Barras, followed by his long file of prisoners, conducted his men back to the convention. Day was just beginning to dawn, and discovered Robespierre carried on a litter by four gendarmes, his face covered with a handkerchief steeped in blood: the persons who bore Couthon had let him fall and roll in the mud at the corner of the place de Grève; when they thought proper to take him up, his clothes were soiled and torn, so as to leave a portion of his throat and breast quite uncovered. Robespierre the younger was conveyed in a state of utter insensibility in the arms of two men of the people. Next followed the corpse of Lebas, over which had hastily been flung a table-cover spotted with blood. Then came Saint-Just, bare-headed, and with downcast looks; his hands were tied behind him, and his countenance bespoke rather submission to his fate, than shame for having provoked it. At five o'clock the head of the column of soldiers entered the Tuileries, where the convention was awaiting the termination of the affair, without fear or apprehension as to its results.

Robespierre was laid upon a table in the adjoining ante-room, his head supported by the back of a chair: a crowd of persons were continually flocking in to obtain, by means of clambering on stools and benches, a view of the fallen creature, once the idol and ruler of the republic. Some even among those who had favoured and cringed before him only the day previously, came to assure themselves he would never rise again. The wretched man was overwhelmed with expressions of contempt, invectives, and abuse. Nothing was spared him; the officers of the convention pointed him out to the spectators in the same manner as a ferocious beast is exposed in a menagerie. The unhappy being feigned death to escape the insults and ignominy heaped upon him. A man in the employ of the committee of public safety, who, while he rejoiced in the downfall of a tyrant, pitied the unfortunate creature thus at the mercy of his enemies, approached Robespierre, unfastened his garter, and, drawing down his stocking, placed his finger on the artery in his leg, whose full and regular pulsations announced the vital strength he still possessed. "Let him be searched!" exclaimed the crowd; and upon so doing, a brace of pistols, with the arms of France engraved on the case that contained them, was found in his pocket. "What a scoundrel!" cried the bystanders; "a proof of his aspiring to the throne may be found in his using the proscribed symbols of royalty." These pistols, shut up in their cases, still loaded, abundantly testify that Robespierre did not shoot himself.[1]

Although lying motionless, and apparently unconscious, he both heard and saw all that was passing around him. The blood that flowed from his wounds coagulated in his mouth; regaining a little strength, he stanched this blood with the fur that covered the case of his pistols; his dim but still observing eye wandered among the crowd as though seeking some friendly countenance from whom he might hope to obtain either justice or compassion; but vain was the search: horror alone was imprinted on every face, and the wretched man shuddered, and closed his eyes. The heat of the chamber was most oppressive: a burning fever glowed on the cheeks of Robespierre, while perspiration streamed from his brow: no hand was extended to assist him. They had placed beside him, on the table, a cup of vinegar, and a sponge. From time to time he moistened the sponge, and applied it to his lips.

After this long exposure at the entrance of the Salle, from whence the

[1 Some historians assert, however, that Robespierre's wound was from his own revolver. Of these are Thiers,*j* Mignet,*k* and Dareste.*c*]

fallen man could hear the vehement language employed against himself by all who spoke from the tribune, he was removed to the committee of General Surety, where Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Vadier, his most implacable enemies, awaited to go through the form of his examination; but he replied only by looks. His interrogators shortened his misery.

At three o'clock the whole party was led or carried, as necessity required, before the revolutionary tribunal. The judges and juries were composed of the same men who only a few hours previously were ready to consign to death all who were inimical to the very individuals they were now assembled to sacrifice. Fouquier-Tinville read the extraordinary decrees with his accustomed tone and manner.

As the clock struck six, the carts appointed to convey the condemned to the scaffold drew up at the foot of the grand staircase. Robespierre, his brother, Couthon, Henriot, and Lebas were merely the mangled remains of men; they were tied by the arms, legs, or trunk, to the bottom of the first vehicle. The jolting of the clumsy machine, as it rumbled over the stones, drew from the agonised creatures within shrieks of pain and dreadful groans; they were taken through the longest and most populous streets of Paris. Every window, door, and balcony — even the roofs of the houses were crowded with spectators, of whom the principal part were women dressed as for a *fête;* these clapped their hands joyfully as the procession passed, and seemed to fancy they were expiating the enormities of the reign of terror by execrating him who had bestowed his own name on it. The cart was beset by the children and friends of former victims shouting, "Kill him! Kill him! Let the guillotine do its work on him!" While the people, preserving a gloomy silence, looked on without any demonstration of either satisfaction or regret, groups of children, who had been deprived of their fathers — women, whose husbands had been torn from them, alone broke through the file of gendarmes, and clinging to the wheels and axles of the carts, loaded Robespierre with bitter imprecations, as though fearing that death would cheat them of their revenge and exultation. The head of Robespierre was bound with a blood-stained handkerchief, that supported his chin, and was tied over his hair, leaving only one of his cheeks, his forehead, and eyes visible. The gendarmes who escorted him pointed him out to the people by a contemptuous motion of the point of their sabres. The unfortunate object of these humiliations turned away his head and shrugged up his shoulders, as though commiserating the error of those who attributed to him alone all the crimes committed in his name. The whole of his intellect seemed centred in his eyes, while his attitude indicated resignation and not fear: the mystery that had veiled his life shrouded his thoughts, and he died without one last word.

Having reached the base of the statue of Liberty, the executioners carried the wounded men to the platform of the guillotine. Not one of them addressed a word or a reproach to the people; they read their doom too clearly in the unmoved countenances of the spectators. Robespierre mounted the ladder with a firm step. Before the knife was loosened, the executioners pulled off the bandage which enveloped his face, in order to prevent the linen from deadening the blow of the axe. The agony occasioned by this drew from the wretched sufferer a cry of anguish that was heard to the opposite side of the place de la Révolution; then followed a silence like that of the grave, interrupted, at intervals, by a dull, sullen noise; the guillotine fell, and the head of Robespierre rolled into the basket. The crowd held their breath for some seconds, then burst into a loud and unanimous cheering.

LAMARTINE ON ROBESPIERRE[1]

Such was the end of Robespierre and his party, surprised and immolated by the very manœuvre which he had planned to bring back the Terror to the law, the Revolution to order, and the republic to unity. Overthrown by men some better and some worse than himself, he had the unutterable misfortune of dying the same day on which the Terror ended, and thus of accumulating on his name the blood of punishments he would fain have spared, and the curses of victims he would willingly have saved. His death was the date and not the cause of the cessation of terror. Deaths would have ceased by his triumphs, as they did by his death. Thus did divine justice dishonour his repentance, and cast misfortune on his good intentions, making of his tomb a gulf filled up. It has made of his memory an enigma of which history trembles to pronounce the solution, fearing to do him an injustice if she brand it as a crime, or to create horror if she should term it virtue! To be just and instructive, we must unhesitatingly associate these two words, which have a repugnancy to unite, and compose a complex word, or rather it is impossible to designate what we must despair to define. This man was, and must ever remain, shadowy — undefined.

There is a design in his life, and this design is vast — the reign of reason, by the medium of democracy. There is a momentum, and that momentum is divine — it was a thirst after the truth and justice in the laws. There is an action, and that action is meritorious — it is the struggle for life and death against vice, lying, and despotism. There is a devotion, and this devotion is as constant, absolute, as an antique immolation — it was the sacrifice of himself, of his youth, his repose, his happiness, his ambition, his life, his memory, and his work. Finally, there is a means, and that means is, in turns, execrable or legitimate — it is popularity. He caressed the people by its ignoble tendencies, he exaggerated suspicion, excited envy, sharpened anger, envenomed vengeance. He opened the veins of the social body to cure the disease; but he allowed life to flow out, pure or impure, with indifference, without casting himself between the victims and the executioners. He did not desire evil, and yet accepted it. He surrendered, to what he believed the pressure of situation, the heads of the king, the queen, their innocent sister. He yielded to pretended necessity the head of Vergniaud; to fear and domination the head of Danton. He allowed his name to serve, for eighteen months, as the standard of the scaffold, and the justification of death.

He hoped subsequently to redeem that which is never redeemed — present crime, through the purity, the holiness of future institutions. He was intoxicated with the perspective of public felicity, whilst France was palpitating on the block. He desired to extirpate, with the iron blade, all the ill-growing roots of the social soil. He believed himself to be the right hand of providence — the instrument of the designs of destiny. He put himself in the place of God. He desired to be the exterminating and creative genius of the Revolution. He forgot that if every man thus made a deity of himself, there could only remain one man on the globe at the end of the world, and that this last man would be the assassin of all the others! He besmeared with blood the purest doctrines of philosophy. He inspired the future with a dread of the people's reign, repugnance to the institution of the republic, a doubt of liberty. He fell at last in his first

[1 With these words Lamartine ends his *History of the Girondists*.]

struggle with the Terror, because he did not acquire, by resisting it at first, the right of power to quell it. His principles were sterile and fatal, like his proscriptions, and he died exclaiming (with the despondency of Brutus), "The republic perishes with me!" He was in effect, at that moment, the soul of the republic, and it vanished with his last sigh. If Robespierre had maintained himself pure, and made no concessions to the wild schemes of demagogues up to this crisis of weariness and remorse, the republic would have survived, grown young again, and triumphed in him. It sought a ruler, whilst he only appeared as its accomplice, and was preparing to become its Cromwell.

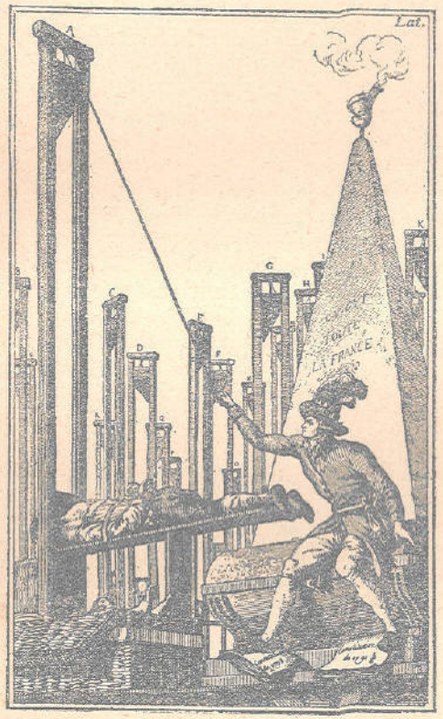
A cause is frequently but the name of an individual. The cause of the democracy should not be condemned to veil or justify that of Robespierre. The type of democracy should be magnanimous, generous, clement, and indisputable as truth. The great epoch of the Revolution ended with Robespierre and Saint-Just. The second race of revolutionists began. The republic fell from tragedy into intrigue, from spiritualism into ambition, from fanaticism into cupidity. At this moment, when everything grows small, let us learn to contemplate what was so vast.

The Revolution had lasted only five years. These five years are five centuries for France. Never perhaps on this earth, at any period since the commencement of the Christian era, did any country produce, in so short a space of time, such an eruption of ideas, men, natures, characters, geniuses, talents, catastrophes, crimes, and virtues, as during these convulsive throes of the social and political future which is called by the name of France — neither the age of Cæsar and Octavius at Rome, nor the age of Charlemagne amongst the Gauls and in Germany, nor the age of Pericles in Athens, nor of Leo X in Italy, nor of Louis XIV in France, nor of Cromwell in England. It was as if the earth were in labour to produce a progressive order of societies, and made an effort of fecundity comparable to the energetic work of regeneration which providence desired to accomplish. Men were born like the instantaneous personifications of things which should think, speak, or act: Voltaire, good sense; Jean Jacques Rousseau, the ideal; Condorcet, calculation; Mirabeau, impetuosity; Vergniaud, impulse; Danton, audacity; Marat, fury; Madame Roland, enthusiasm; Charlotte Corday, vengeance; Robespierre, Utopia; Saint-Just, the fanaticism of the Revolution.

Behind these came the secondary men of each of these groups, forming a body which the Revolution detached after having united it, and the members of which she brake, one by one, as useless implements. Light shone from every point of the horizon at once; darkness fell back; prejudices were cast off; consciences were freed; tyrannies trembled, and the people rose. Thrones crumbled: intimidated Europe ceased to strike, and, stricken herself, receded in order to gaze on this grand spectacle at a greater distance. This deadly struggle for the cause of human reason is a thousand times more glorious than the victories of the armies which succeeded to it. It acquired for the world inalienable truths, instead of acquiring for a nation the precarious increase of provinces. It enlarged the domain of mind, instead of expanding the limits of the people. The heads of these men fall one by one; some justly, others unjustly; but they fall in consummation of the work. We accuse or absolve, weep over or curse them. Individuals are innocent or guilty, loved or hateful, victims or executioners. The working out is vast, and the idea soars above the instruments, as the ever pure cause soars over the horrors of the field of battle. After five years, the Revolution is nothing but a vast cemetery. Over the tomb of each of these

victims is inscribed a word which characterises it. Over one, Philosophy; another, Eloquence; another, Genius; another, Courage: here Crime, there Virtue: but over one and all is written, "Died for posterity," and, "Workman in the cause of humanity."

A nation should unquestionably bewail its dead, and not console itself for one head unjustly and hatefully sacrificed; but it should not regret its blood when it has flowed to bring forth everlasting truths. Ideas vegetate from human blood. Revelations descend from scaffolds. The history of the Revolution is glorious and sad as the morrow of a victory, and the eve of a battle. But if this history be full of mourning, it is also full of faith. It resembles the antique drama, in which, whilst the narrator gives the recital, the chorus of the people sings the glory, bewails the victims, and raises a hymn of consolation and hope to God![g]



THE GUILLOTINE
(From an old French print)

DARESTE'S ESTIMATE OF ROBESPIERRE

Robespierre personified the reign of terror. No one had contributed more than he towards establishing and executing it. It was he who had invented the theory of it. He, with Saint-Just, was the doctrinaire of the revolutionary government. It was he who had killed Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Custine and the other generals, the Girondins, Danton and Camille Desmoulins, Hébert and his acolytes. By means of the guillotine he had decimated all parties, or rather all resistance without distinction of party. Although he sometimes exclaimed against the shedding of so much blood, he had not stopped it, because he had always met with dissatisfied persons, had always held them to be conspirators, and had at once sent them to the scaffold. He would never have established order in France, because for a year he had been master and disorder increased continually. Neither would he have made peace, as it was imagined abroad he would do, if he consolidated his dictatorship; that would have been impossible for him. His system had no issue. In vain he wrapped himself in his virtue; in vain he tried to distinguish himself from vulgar throat-cutters by the nicety of his attire and by his manners: he ruled through blood. With him no one could foresee when the reign of blood would cease; that day would come only when he was dead. That was what France understood on the 9th Thermidor.

His more or less confessed panegyrists have claimed that he would have reconstituted a regular government and that he had declared the necessity for it. If he had wished it even, he would not have done it; he could not have done it. A month before his death he still issued an order for a billion more assignats and a new forced loan on the rich. Wholly devoted to the prosecution of conspirators, his enemies, he declared a truce only once, the day on which he organised the festival of the Supreme Being. To-day ignorance and blindness alone can defend him.

Nevertheless the remembrance attached to his name has something of grandeur as well as of terror. The reason is that for nearly a year he was master of France and he was master because he had power, which always finds admirers, and which people had long sought elsewhere without finding it. But the use he made of it proved, as the revolutionist Mercier[p] justly said, that great talents are not necessary to commit great crimes.[c]

THIERS ON ROBESPIERRE

It may be asked what would have resulted had Robespierre been victorious? The state of abandonment in which he found himself proves that it was impossible. But, supposing him successful, he must have either yielded to the general feeling or succumbed somewhat later. Like all usurpers, he would have been impelled to substitute a mild and tranquil government for the horrors of incessant strife. But, in truth, the part of a usurper was for him impracticable. The French Revolution was on too vast a scale to permit the same man, a deputy in the constituent assembly of 1789, to be proclaimed emperor or protector in the cathedral of Notre Dame in 1804. In a country less advanced and of smaller confines, such as England was, where the same individual might be both delegate and general, and actually unite those two characters, a Cromwell was able to enact the parts of a factionist at the commencement, and of an usurping soldier at the end. But in a revolution extending over so wide a surface as the French, where war was so terrible and predominant, and where the same individual could not occupy both the tribune and the camp, the factionists first destroyed each other; and after them came soldiers, one of whom remained the ultimate master.

It was not reserved for Robespierre, therefore, to act the usurper in France. Still, how came it to pass that he survived all those famous revolutionists, who were so superior in genius and might to himself — Danton, for example? Robespierre possessed undeniable integrity; and to captivate the masses an unsullied reputation is essential. He was devoid of pity — a quality which, in revolutions, ruins those who hearken to its impulses. He had, moreover, in a supreme degree, that stubborn and indomitable self-sufficiency and assumption which weighs so influentially with mankind. These qualifications were sufficient to insure his survival beyond all his contemporary rivals. But he was of the worst order of men. A zealot without passions, lacking the vices, doubtless, to which they expose, but equally so the courage, the magnanimity, and the sensibility which usually accompany them, exclusively wrapped up in his pride and dogma, hiding in the hour of danger, and reappearing to gather homage after the victory was secured by others, he presents himself to our contemplation as one of the most odious beings who have ever domineered over men, and we should say also one of the most vile, did we not acknowledge his strong conviction and his undeviating rectitude.[j]

A SANE VIEW OF THE TERROR

The most stupendous phenomenon, and yet the most inexplicable enigma of the whole French Revolution, is the revolutionary tribunal. With a distant and general view of its wholesale atrocities, the public memory is but too familiar; but the real motives of its creation — the interior springs by which it was worked — the object, the interest which any man or party could have had, or fancied it had, in such a protracted and diurnal system of indiscriminate murder, and, above all, the wanton, the impudent, the insane absurdity of thousands of its individual judgments, are mysteries which, the more closely they are examined, seem to us only the more difficult to be explained or even guessed at.

We begin by observing that its very name and date have been generally misunderstood. We hear and read of the revolutionary tribunal; but, in fact, there were four of them usually comprised under that generic name, and characterised by the same spirit of injustice and cruelty, but established at different periods, by different factions, for different purposes, and with different powers. The first was instituted on the 17th of August, 1792, which, after having condemned and executed twenty-eight persons (of whom but half a dozen were on political charges), was suddenly and contemptuously dismissed on the 30th of November. The second was that damned to everlasting fame as the revolutionary tribunal, which has extended its terrible name to the others. This tribunal was created on the 10th of March, 1793, and after executing 2,730 persons, was abolished, and the majority of its members were sent to the scaffold, on the fall of Robespierre. The third may be considered as a renewal of the last, but with restricted powers and different persons; it was reorganised on the 9th of August, 1794, but, after an existence of about four months, was abrogated on the 24th of December, 1794, on which day it was replaced by the fourth of these tribunals, which, after trying and condemning Fouquier-Tinville, the *accusateur-public* of the second tribunal, and those of his colleagues who still survived, was finally dissolved on the 2nd of June, 1795.

The name, too, has been generally misunderstood. To the first two tribunals the name "revolutionary" was at their creation formally and purposely denied, because that title was proposed with the intention of relieving them from the ordinary principles or restraints of law, customs, or constitution, with license to pursue by every kind of means — *per fas et nefas* — the ultimate object of assuring what the rulers of the hour should be pleased to denominate the *salut public*. It was in this sense of the word that the convention suspended the constitution it had itself just created (October 10th, 1793), and declared itself a revolutionary power, and its government a revolutionary government, and that Fouquier-Tinville complained that his prosecutors confounded the justice of an ordinary with that of a revolutionary tribunal.[r]

In the preceding pages, we have given the most eloquent accounts obtainable of the Terror and its cruelties. But, in remembering it, it is needful to avoid a breach of the laws of perspective. The period stands out in the average mind as one of unequalled, unheard-of atrocity. Yet the total number put to death at Paris[1] by the revolutionary tribunal in the course of several months is not placed above 4,000 by the extremest

[1 The destructions of the Terror in the provinces were very large, Carrier at Nantes having executed at least 5,000; but the provincial Terror was largely a merciless treatment of rebellious districts, while Paris suffered in spite of her fidelity to the cause.]

calculation of Montgaillard;[l] 3,000 being a more probable number and 1,862 being the official statement. This, indeed, is bad enough, but it must not be taken as a proof that the populace is more savage at heart than the upper classes, for it was only five years later, and in a shorter period, at Naples, that the royalists put to death more than 4,000 who had shown republican sympathies during the brief period when Naples was known as the Parthenopean Republic. This too at a time when the royalists had returned, and when the English fleet was riding in the harbour to protect the king, Ferdinand. Indeed, Lord Nelson's noble fame is blotched indelibly by the fact that he dishonoured the terms of capitulation and allowed a garrison that had surrendered, trusting in the ordinary laws of war, to be put to death. If France had her *noyades* of Carrier, so royalist Naples saw her citizens walking the plank in droves into the waters of the bay. As Weber[m] says:

"The republicans of Naples were now visited by a frightful punishment. Supported by Admiral Nelson, who lay with his fleet before the city, and who, seduced by the charms of Lady Hamilton, allowed himself to be made the instrument of an ignominious vengeance, the priesthood and the royal government practised deeds before which the atrocities of the French reign of terror retreat into obscurity. After the undertakings and the plunderings of the *lazzaroni* were over, the business of the judge, the jailer, and the executioner commenced. Every partisan, adherent, or favourer of the republican institutions was prosecuted. Upwards of four thousand of the most respectable and refined men and women died upon the scaffold or in frightful dungeons; for it was precisely the noblest portion of the nation who wished to redeem the people from their degradation and ignorance, and had joined themselves with patriotic enthusiasm to the new system."

Look backward and consider the thousands who perished in the fires of the Inquisition — a royal and churchly institution. If so noble and gentle a woman as Queen Isabella of Spain could permit so virtuous and godly a churchman as Torquemada to burn 8,800 men and women at the stake in his one administration and to visit torture, exile, and other penalties on a total of 105,294 fellow-creatures, for a mere difference in religious dogma, how shall we call the revolutionary tribunal inhuman, surrounded as it was with foreign armies and threatened as it was everywhere with insurrectionary bands of equal ruthlessness?

The volumes of this history are too full of the atrocities of despots before and after the proverbial Nero, to need more than an allusion. On their side of the ledger of human misery must go the great wars in which monarchs fell out about the alleged rights of their sons, their brothers, their wives, their mistresses, their cousins, their bastards, and fought out their petty desires with great armies, herding together the peasants and the bourgeoisie in droves and driving them pell-mell into battles where stupidity or treachery sacrificed them by the thousand. These unnumbered victims of monarchical greed or spite must be remembered when we would place the reign of terror in its place upon the scale of horror.

The wretched Persians whom Xerxes lashed into Greece had neither knowledge nor hatred of the Greeks; yet 6,400 of them fell in a few hours at Marathon, and at Salamis the slaughter was wholesale. Of the hundreds of thousands — perhaps a million or more — that Xerxes led into Europe, only a small part ever returned to their homes. In later years an almost equal host was assailed at Arbela by Alexander dragging his homesick Greeks upon an inexcusable raid; the estimates of Persians killed in that one

assault range from 40,000 to 300,000. In one day Alexander put to the sword 17,000 Hindus at Sangala. Men of his own army who begged him to turn back were put to death. In the desert of Gedrosia his people, women and children as well as soldiers, perished by the hundred. To make a funeral offering to his friend Hephæstion, he slew the entire male population of the Cossæi. Yet the name of Marat provokes horror; that of Alexander, admiration. Hannibal leading a vast horde of conscripts over the Alps, where they died like flies, practically annihilated an army of 88,000 Romans at Cannæ, and lost 6,000 of his own. Yet we think of Hannibal with pity for his final failure.

William the Conqueror, out of pure land-greed and personal disgust at Harold, practically annihilated in one day, at Hastings, Harold's army of at least 25,000 and lost 12,000 of his own men. The Crusades were undertaken for various reasons, the one most loudly proclaimed being a passion for the reclaiming of Christ's sepulchre. Every abomination known to history resulted from the two centuries of plundering expeditions, and the direct loss of life on both sides would be put low at a million.

In the so-called Wars of the Roses between the rival houses of Lancaster and York it is estimated that, while only twelve princes of the blood and two hundred nobles lost their lives, there perished a hundred thousand of the common people. The Hundred Years' War in which the French expelled the English from France cost myriads of lives and kept the French territory for a century a wilderness of starvation and barbarism. The War of the Spanish Succession was purely a matter of Louis XIV's greed and intrigue. In the battle of Blenheim Marlborough killed 10,000 French and Bavarians, at Ramillies the slain on both sides were 17,000; at Malplaquet 32,000 fell. These are only three battles out of a war lasting eleven years. The War of the Austrian Succession was again a mere family quarrel over inheritances, yet it included Fontenoy with a loss of 25,000, and a side issue was Culloden with 2,500 Scotchmen killed—more than the whole loss in the Terror. The Seven Years' War was a glorious means of personal aggrandisement to Frederick who gained by it the epithet of Great; yet it cost, according to his own reckoning, 180,000 lives among his own partisans, a general diminution of Prussia's population by 500,000, and a grand total of 853,000 soldiers killed on all sides.

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871 was again a case where a meddlesome court and a ruthless monarch hurled a people unwilling and unprepared into an incalculable disaster which has covered French military fame with an undeserved accusation of cowardice; though at the battle of Wörth 5,000 French were killed, at Metz the loss was far greater; and at Sedan 3,000 were killed on each side. In the siege of Paris, though there were only 396 deaths due to bombardment, the death-rate averaged 3,600 a week; and in one week 2,500 infants died, while smallpox carried off altogether 64,000 lives. In one typical sortie, a thousand French lost their lives in a few hours. The country suffered infinitely more than under the Terror, and the Germans showed at times an inexcusable contempt for the laws of war and humanity. The cost of this war to France was over £360,000,000, or nearly two billion dollars. In a diplomatic circular to Prussia, Favre said that 200,000 had fallen by September, 1870. This appalling disaster must all be charged to monarchic ambition. Before this the less than two thousand executions of the Terror grow almost petty, seem almost merciful.

On this point Gamaliel Bradford[n] says: "The last word has by no means as yet been said as to the French Revolution of 1789 and its results.

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The horror which it inspired has been softened by the lapse of years, and men are more disposed to study its real meaning in a philosophical spirit. A notable instance of this is the work of H. Morse Stephens,[o] which marks a great change in the English point of view. Setting apart the previous wars of the old French monarchy, it may be doubted whether the amount of human suffering caused in France in the years 1789 to 1795 by the direct and conscious action of man, apart from the consequences of political mistakes, was at all to be compared with that caused, even to Germany, by the German invasion of France in 1870–1871, especially if we include the fate of the thousands of widows and orphans thereby created. Yet this event is hailed by all Germany as a glorious triumph, and the rest of the world is rather disposed to admit the claim. That a king or emperor should send half a million of men to slaughter and destruction is regarded as quite in the natural course of history. It is only when a convention of nameless men orders the beheading of a king and queen, and a peasantry pillages and burns the castles of a few thousands of lords and gentlemen, that the vials of wrath are poured out."

It is unnecessary to continue the list of royal reigns of terror. Enough has been shown even from this mere indication of the endless holocausts offered to monarchical greed and vanity to indicate that the execution of some 1,862 persons in the fourteen months of Terror at Paris, between March, 1793, and July 27th, 1794, hardly deserves its magnificent fame. It must always be remembered that the Terror was a hysteria due to the fear of the great armies of foreign kings and the uncertain sympathies of malcontents within the walls; it should not be forgotten that the revolutionary tribunal was composed, not of illiterate anarchists but of men of family and education; that the vast majority of the people, even the nobility, escaped death; that the Terror accomplished its purpose of keeping down treachery in the face of the enemy, and that when the reaction set in, the French people themselves showed as much horror of the nightmare as foreigners have ever shown. Even Carlyle, who cannot be accused of minimising the fiendishness displayed by the revolutionary tribunal, thus sums it up:[a]

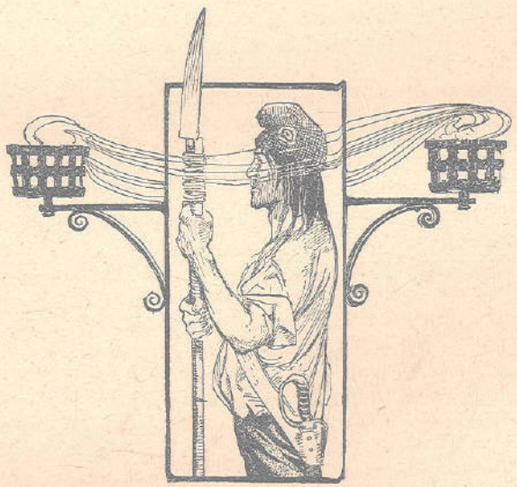
It was the frightfullest thing ever borne of Time? One of the frightfullest. This Convention, now grown Antijacobin, did, with an eye to justify and fortify itself, publish Lists of what the Reign of Terror had perpetrated: Lists of Persons Guillotined. The Lists, cries splenetic Abbé Montgaillard,[l] were not complete. They contain the names of, How many persons thinks the Reader?—Two-thousand all but a few. There were above Four-thousand, cries Montgaillard: so many were guillotined, fusilladed, noyaded, done to dire death; of whom Nine-hundred were women. It is a horrible sum of human lives, M. l'Abbé:—some ten times as many shot rightly on a field of battle, and one might have had his Glorious-Victory with *Te-Deum*. It is not far from the two-hundredth part of what perished in the entire Seven-Years' War. By which Seven-Years' War, did not the great Fritz wrench Silesia from the great Theresa; and a Pompadour, stung by epigrams, satisfy herself that she could not be an Agnes Sorel?

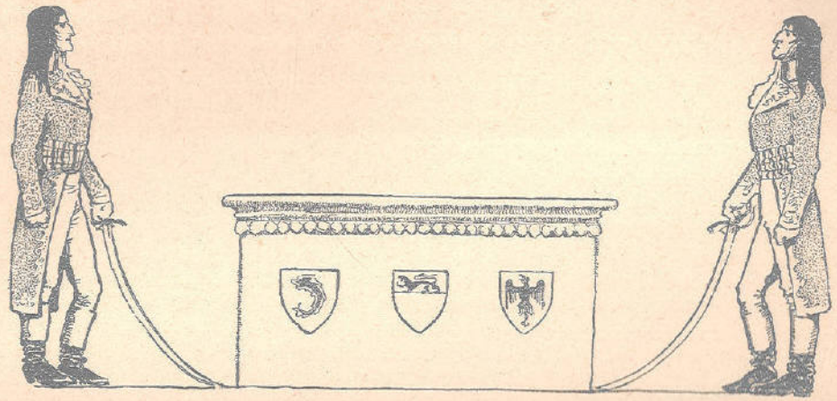
But what if History somewhere on this Planet were to hear of a Nation, the third soul of whom had not, for thirty weeks each year, as many third-rate potatoes as would sustain him?[1] History, in that case, feels bound to consider that starvation is starvation; that starvation from age to age presupposes much; History ventures to assert that the French Sansculotte of

[1] Report of the Irish Poor-Law Commission, 1836.

Ninety-three, who, roused from long death-sleep, could rush at once to the frontiers, and die fighting for an immortal Hope and Faith of Deliverance for him and his, was but the *second*-miserablest of men! The Irish Sans-potato, had he not senses then, nay a soul! In his frozen darkness, it was bitter for him to die famishing; bitter to see his children famish. It was bitter for him to be a beggar, a liar, and a knave. Nay, if that dreary Greenland-wind of benighted Want, perennial from sire to son, had frozen him into a kind of torpor and numb callosity, so that he saw not, felt not, — was this, for a creature with a soul in it, some assuagement; or the cruellest wretchedness of all?

Such things were; such things are; and they go on in silence peaceably: — and Sansculottisms follow them. History, looking back over this France through long times, back to Turgot's time for instance, when dumb Drudgery staggered up to its King's Palace, and in wide expanse of sallow faces, squalor and winged raggedness, presented hieroglyphically its Petition of Grievances; and for answer got hanged on a "new gallows forty feet high," — confesses mournfully that there is no period to be met with, in which the general Twenty-five Millions of France suffered less than in this period which they name Reign of Terror! But it was not the Dumb Millions that suffered here; it was the Speaking Thousands, and Hundreds and Units; who shrieked and published, and made the world ring with their wail, as they could and should: that is the grand peculiarity. The frightfullest Births of Time are never the loud-speaking ones, for these soon die; they are the silent ones, which can live from century to century![f]





CHAPTER XII

THE WAR WITH ALL EUROPE

[1793-1795 A.D.]

WITH the exception of casual allusions, little has been said heretofore of the girdle of war that surrounded France and kept the frontiers as busy as the interior was seething. It has seemed clearer to set apart for separate chronicle the great deeds of war which the risen French people accomplished in the face of all the nations and in the midst of their astounding political industry. The soldiers of France stood in hollow square fighting four ways at once while within the square the people argued their fierce debates to the death. But debate and destruction were not all. There was a marvellous rise of manufacturing not only of war materials but of war-minds. The peasants, who had grown weary of starving in contempt, found a wild rapture in battle, and since the old officers had chiefly gone over to the aristocratic sympathies of the foreign enemies of France, new officers sprang into existence, like poets born and not made, and they managed huge bodies of men in great battles, defeated learned old masters of war and won imperishable names, many of them before they had reached the age of thirty. A more wonderful triumph of spirit has never been seen in all history, and it is a pity that, owing to the blind incompetence of a later Napoleon in 1870-1871, France should have lost the great name she earned when the first Napoleon was only one boyish genius among others almost equally brilliant.

The first conflicts republican France had with the outer world were, we remember, unfortunate: the raw troops fled like sheep, and the skilful general Dumouriez went over to the enemy. Revolutionary France had her cowardly militia and her Benedict Arnold even as revolutionary America had had a few years before. Then France responded to the first gloating contempt of the outside world with two measures, one eternally odious, the other glorious forever. The first was the wholesale butchery of the Terror; the second was, as we have seen, the "levy in mass," of August 23rd, 1793, when all France took up the arms or the tools of war. Carlyle catches the very fire of the occasion:[a]

CARLYLE ON THE WAR-SPIRIT

Cut off from Sweden and the world, the Republic must learn to make steel for itself; and, by aid of Chemists, she has learnt it. Towns that knew only iron, now know steel: from their new dungeons at Chantilly, Aristocrats may hear the rustle of our new steel furnace there. Do not bells transmute themselves into cannon; iron stanchions into the white-weapon (*arme blanche*), by sword-cutlery? The wheels of Langres scream, amid their sputtering fire-halo; grinding mere swords. The stithies of Charleville ring with gun-making. What say we, Charleville? Two-hundred and fifty-eight Forges stand in the open spaces of Paris itself; a hundred and forty of them in the Esplanade of the Invalides, fifty-four in the Luxembourg Garden: so many Forges stand; grim Smiths beating and forging at lock and barrel there. The Clockmakers have come, requisitioned, to do the touch-holes, the hard-solder and file-work. Five great Barges swing at anchor on the Seine Stream, loud with boring; the great press-drills grating harsh thunder to the general ear and heart. And deft Stock-makers do gouge and rasp; and all men bestir themselves, according to their cunning: — in the language of hope, it is reckoned that "a thousand finished muskets can be delivered daily." Chemists of the Republic have taught us miracles of swift tanning: the cordwainer bores and stitches; — not of "wood and pasteboard," or he shall answer it to Tinville! The women sew tents and coats, the children scrape surgeons'-lint, old men sit in the market-places; able men are on march; all men in requisition: from Town to Town flutters, on the Heaven's winds, this Banner: The French People risen against Tyrants.

All which is well. But now arises the question: What is to be done for saltpetre? Interrupted Commerce and the English Navy shut us out from saltpetre; and without saltpetre there is no gunpowder. Republican Science again sits meditative; discovers that saltpetre exists here and there, though in attenuated quantity; that old plaster of walls holds a sprinkling of it; — that the earth of the Paris Cellars holds a sprinkling of it, diffused through the common rubbish; that were these dug up and washed, saltpetre might be had. Whereupon, swiftly, see! the Citoyens, with upshoved *bonnet rouge*, or with doffed bonnet, and hair toil-wetted; digging fiercely, each in his own cellar, for saltpetre. The Earth-heap rises at every door; the Citoyennes with hod and bucket carrying it up; the Citoyens, pith in every muscle, shovelling and digging: for life and saltpetre. Dig, my braves; and right well speed ye! What of saltpetre is essential the Republic shall not want.

Consummation of Sansculottism has many aspects and tints: but the brightest tint, really of a solar or stellar brightness, is this which the Armies give it. That same fervour of Jacobinism, which internally fills France with hatreds, suspicions, scaffolds and Reason-worship, does, on the Frontiers, shew itself as a glorious *Pro patria mori*. Ever since Dumouriez's defection, three Convention Representatives attend every General. Committee of *Salut* has sent them; often with this Laconic order only: "Do thy duty" (*Fais ton devoir*). It is strange, under what impediments the fire of Jacobinism, like other such fires, will burn. These Soldiers have shoes of wood and pasteboard, or go booted in hay-ropes, in dead of winter; they skewer a bast mat round their shoulders, and are destitute of most things. What then? It is for Rights of Frenchhood, of Manhood, that they fight: the unquenchable spirit, here as elsewhere, works miracles. "With steel and bread," says the Convention Representative, "one may get to China." The

Generals go fast to the guillotine; justly and unjustly. From which what inference? This, among others: That ill-success is death; that in victory alone is life! To conquer or die is no theatrical palabra, in these circumstances, but a practical truth and necessity. All Girondism, Halfness, Compromise is swept away. Forward, ye Soldiers of the Republic, captain and man! Dash, with your Gaelic impetuosity, on Austria, England, Prussia, Spain, Sardinia; Pitt, Coburg, York, and the Devil and the World! Behind us is but the Guillotine; before us is Victory, Apotheosis, and Millennium without end!

See, accordingly, on all Frontiers, how the Sons of Night, astonished after short triumph, do recoil; — the Sons of the Republic flying at them, with wild *Ça ira* or Marseillese *Aux armes*, with the temper of cat-o'-mountain, or demon incarnate; which no Son of Night can stand! Spain, which came bursting through the Pyrenees, rustling with Bourbon banners, and went conquering here and there for a season, falters at such cat-o'-mountain welcome; draws itself in again; too happy now were the Pyrenees impassable. Not only does Dugommier, conqueror of Toulon, drive Spain back; he invades Spain. General Dugommier invades it by the Eastern Pyrenees; General Müller shall invade it by the Western. Shall, that is the word: Committee of *Salut Public* has said it; Representative Cavaignac, on mission there, must see it done. Impossible! cries Müller. — Infallible! answers Cavaignac. Difficulty, impossibility, is to no purpose. "The Committee is deaf on that side of its head," answers Cavaignac (*n'entend pas de cette oreille là*). "How many wantest thou, of men, of horses, cannons? Thou shalt have them. Conquerors, conquered or hanged, forward we must." Which things also, even as the Representative spake them, were done. The Spring of the new Year sees Spain invaded: and redoubts are carried, and Passes and Heights of the most scarped description; Spanish Field-officerism struck mute at such cat-o'-mountain spirit, the cannon forgetting to fire. Swept are the Pyrenees; Town after Town flies open, burst by terror or the petard. In the course of another year, Spain will crave Peace; acknowledge its sins and the Republic; nay, in Madrid, there will be joy as for a victory, that even Peace is got.

General Lazare Hoche (1768-1797)

Few things, we repeat, can be notabler than these Convention Representatives, with their power more than kingly. Nay at bottom are they not Kings, Able-men, of a sort; chosen from the Seven-hundred and Forty-nine French Kings; with this order, Do thy duty? Representative Levasseur, of small

stature, by trade a mere pacific Surgeon-Accoucheur, has mutinies to quell; mad hosts (mad at the Doom of Custine) bellowing far and wide; he alone amid them, the one small Representative, — small, but as hard as flint, which also carries fire in it! So too, at Hondschoote, far in the afternoon, he declares that the Battle is not lost; that it must be gained; and fights, himself, with his own obstetric hand; — horse shot under him, or say on foot, "up to the haunches in tide-water"; cutting stoccado and passado there, in defiance of Water, Earth, Air, and Fire, the choleric little Representative that he was! Whereby, as natural, Royal Highness of York had to withdraw, — occasionally at full gallop; like to be swallowed by the tide: and his Siege of Dunkirk became a dream, realising only much loss of beautiful siege-artillery and of brave lives.

COMTE JEAN BAPTISTE JOURDAN
(1762-1833)

General Houchard, it would appear, stood behind a hedge on this Hondschoote occasion; wherefore they have since guillotined him. A new General Jourdan, late Sergeant Jourdan, commands in his stead: he, in long-winded Battles of Wattignies, "murderous artillery-fire mingling itself with sound of Revolutionary battle-hymns," forces Austria behind the Sambre again; has hopes of purging the soil of Liberty. With hard wrestling, with artillerying and *ça-ira*-ing, it shall be done. In the course of a new Summer, Valenciennes will see itself beleaguered; Condé beleaguered; whatsoever is yet in the hands of Austria beleaguered and bombarded: nay, by Convention Decree, we even summon them all "either to surrender in twenty-four hours, or else be put to the sword"; — a high saying, which, though it remains unfulfilled, may shew what spirit one is of.

Representative Drouet, as an Old-dragoon, could fight by a kind of second nature. Or see Saint-Just, in the Lines of Weissenburg, though physically of a timid apprehensive nature, how he charges with his "Alsatian Peasants armed hastily" for the nonce; the solemn face of him blazing into flame; his black hair and tricolour hat-taffeta flowing in the breeze! These our Lines of Weissenburg were indeed forced, and Prussia and the Emigrants rolled through: but we re-force the Lines of Weissenburg; and Prussia and the Emigrants roll back again still faster, — hurled with bayonet charges and fiery *ça-ira*-ing.

Ci-devant Sergeant Pichegru, *ci-devant* Sergeant Hoche, risen now to be Generals, have done wonders here. Tall Pichegru was meant for the Church; was Teacher of Mathematics once, in Brienne School, — his remarkablest Pupil there was the Boy Napoleon Bonaparte. He then, not

in the sweetest humour, enlisted, exchanging ferula for musket; and had got the length of the halberd, beyond which nothing could be hoped; when the Bastille barriers falling made passage for him, and he is here. Hoche bore a hand at the literal overturn of the Bastille; he was a Sergeant of the *Gardes Françaises*, spending his pay in rushlights and cheap editions of books. How the Mountains are burst, and many an Enceladus is disemprisoned; and Captains founding on Four parchments of Nobility are blown with their parchments across the Rhine, into Lunar Limbo!

What high feats of arms, therefore, were done in these Fourteen Armies; and how, for love of Liberty and hope of Promotion, lowborn valour cut its desperate way to Generalship; and, from the central Carnot in *Salut Public* to the outmost drummer on the Frontiers, men strove for their Republic, let Readers fancy. The snows of Winter, the flowers of Summer continue to be stained with warlike blood. Gaelic impetuosity mounts ever higher with victory; spirit of Jacobinism weds itself to national vanity: the Soldiers of the Republic are becoming, as we prophesied, very Sons of Fire. Barefooted, barebacked: but with bread and iron you can get to China! It is one Nation against the whole world; but the nation has that within her which the whole world will not conquer. Cimmeria, astonished, recoils faster or slower; all round the Republic there rises fiery, as it were, a magic ring of musket-volleying and *ça-ira*-ing. Majesty of Prussia, as Majesty of Spain, will by and by acknowledge his sins and the Republic; and make a Peace of Bâle.

The Republic, abhorrent of her Guillotine, loves her Army. And with cause. For, surely, if good fighting be a kind of honour, as it is in its season; and be with the vulgar of men, even the chief kind of honour; then here is good fighting, in good season, if there ever was. These Sons of the Republic, they rose, in mad wrath, to deliver her from Slavery and Cimmeria. And have they not done it? Through Maritime Alps, through gorges of Pyrenees, through Low Countries, Northward along the Rhine-valley, far is Cimmeria hurled back from the sacred Motherland. Fierce as fire, they have carried her Tricolour over the faces of all her enemies; — over scarped heights, over cannon-batteries, it has flown victorious, winged with rage. She has "Eleven hundred thousand fighters on foot," this Republic: "at one particular moment she had," or supposed she had, "Seventeen-hundred thousand." Like a ring of lightning, they, volleying and *ça-ira*-ing, begirdle her from shore to shore. Cimmerian Coalition of Despots recoils, smitten with astonishment and strange pangs.

Such a fire is in these Gaelic Republican men; high-blazing; which no Coalition can withstand! Not scutcheons, with four degrees of nobility; but *ci-devant* Sergeants, who have had to clutch Generalship out of the cannon's throat, a Pichegru, a Jourdan, a Hoche, lead them on. They have bread, they have iron; "with bread and iron you can get to China." — See Pichegru's soldiers, this hard winter, in their looped and windowed destitution, in their "straw-rope shoes and cloaks of bast-mat," how they overrun Holland, like a demon-host, the ice having bridged all waters; and rush shouting from victory to victory! Ships in the Texel are taken by hussars on horseback: fled is York; fled is the Stadholder, glad to escape to England, and leave Holland to fraternise. Such a Gaelic fire, we say, blazes in this People, like the conflagration of grass and dry-jungle; which no mortal can withstand — for the moment.

And even so it will blaze and run, scorching all things; and, from Cadiz to Archangel, mad Sansculottism, drilled now into Soldiership, led on by

some "armed Soldier of Democracy" (say, that monosyllabic Artillery-Officer), will set its foot cruelly on the necks of its enemies; and its shouting and their shrieking shall fill the world! — Rash Coalised Kings, such a fire have ye kindled; yourselves fireless, your fighters animated only by drill-sergeants, messroom moralities, and the drummer's cat! However, it is begun, and will not end: not for a matter of twenty years. So long, this Gaelic fire, through its successive changes of colour and character, will blaze over the face of Europe, and afflict and scorch all men: — till it provoke all men; till it kindle another kind of fire, the Teutonic kind, namely; and be swallowed up, so to speak, in a day! For there is a fire comparable to the burning of dry-jungle and grass; most sudden, high-blazing: and another fire which we liken to the burning of coal, or even of anthracite coal; difficult to kindle, but then which no known thing will put out. The ready Gaelic fire, we can remark further, — and remark not in Pichegrus only, but in innumerable Voltaires, Racines, Laplaces, no less; for a man, whether he fight, or sing, or think, will remain the same unity of a man, — is admirable for roasting eggs, in every conceivable sense. The Teutonic anthracite again, as we see in Luthers, Leibnitzes, Shakespeares, is preferable for smelting metals. How happy is our Europe that has both kinds! But be this as it may, the Republic is clearly triumphing.[b]

THE GREAT WORK OF CARNOT

Carlyle has given us the scene in lyric or epic vein. The cold reality is hardly less stirring.[a]

In February, 1793, France had an effective force of only 228,000 men (204,000 under arms); before the month of May, thanks to the activity displayed, she counted 471,000 soldiers (present 397,000); upon the 15th of July, 479,000 according to a note Saint-Just kept for his own instruction, of which we possess the autograph. The official table gives figures a little higher — 483,000 (enrolled 599,000).

In December, the effective force of the army rose to 628,000 men (present under the flag, 554,000). This number reached 1,026,000 (732,000 upon the battle-fields in September, 1794). There is no reason to contest these statements, published at an epoch when exaggeration would profit no one. Nevertheless some say that the republican phalanxes never reached a higher number than 600,000 men; one writer reduces them to 500,000, another to 400,000, adding that they were neither armed, nor fed, nor clothed. Do they hope, by such assertions, to lower the merit of the revolutionary dictators? On the contrary, they raise it. The fewer the resources they had in hand, the more admirable appears the result they obtained; the vanquished powers owe no thanks to the authors of these new calculations. Nothing can do away with this historical truth, that the convention found the enemy within thirty leagues of Paris, and they were able, after prodigious efforts, to conclude peace within thirty leagues of Vienna!

"These immense forces and the means employed to put them in motion," writes Fantin-des-Odoarts,[c] a historian, decidedly a monarchist, "is one of the boldest and most astonishing conceptions that the history of nations has transmitted to us."

The phalanxes, coming in haste from all parts of France, and marching to the common defence, under the eyes of the representatives of the nation, recall the great movement which took place amongst the Gauls when menaced by Cæsar. The convention ordered a general levy, each canton furnished

its contingent; they were placed under the command of four generals, and assisted by a council of deputies from each state. It was not enough to have the men, they must be fed and equipped. They did it very modestly, they did it even very badly, in the beginning; but their patriotism and their devotion only shines out the greater. France was not only to be a camp, she was to be an immense workshop. At Paris there arose, by order of the committee, 248 forges; 140 upon the esplanade des Invalides, 54 in the garden of the Luxembourg, 64 upon the place de l'Indivisibilité; together they ought to produce more than a thousand musket barrels a day. Carnot, giving an account to the convention of this great display of activities, said:

"France, formerly dependent on her own enemies for the primary necessaries relative to her defence, now not only made in her midst sufficient guns to arm all republicans; but she would soon be in a position to sell them to strangers, she would become the great magazine, where the people who wished to make good their rights, would be able to find the means of exterminating their tyrants; and Paris, formerly the abode of effeminacy and frivolity, would be able to glorify herself with the immortal title of the arsenal of the free citizens." It is in the same account one should read by what incredible zeal they arrived at this result in two months. In distributing the forges in great masses upon the public squares and in the promenades, the committee of public safety had for its object to inspire the people with confidence in their own resources, and to render them watchful.

LAZARE NICOLAS MARGUERITE CARNOT (1753–1823)

Carnot did not content himself with presiding over their enthusiastic activity. He considered that for these new soldiers it was necessary to employ a new method of warfare. "Every great nation has made experiments," Saint-Just said in one of his accounts: "the Greeks conquered by the phalanx, the Romans by the legion." The idea of concentrating superior forces at one point, to insure a complete triumph there, and render useless through that the partial advantages obtained elsewhere by his adversary, certainly is not new in the history of wars: all great captains have practised it upon occasions. To the French Revolution belongs the glory of having carried this idea into an immense circle. It was not an arena of several leagues that the opera-glass could sweep over: France was a vast battle-field, over which the eye of thought alone could travel. Invaded throughout, her resistance must not be weak in any one part. But whilst the armies of the powers obeyed separate wills and diverse views of strategy, hers, united as so many regiments under one command, recognised only one generalissimo — the committee of public safety, having for aides-de-camp the delegates of the assembly. From its bureaux, the committee combined their evolutions, and concentrated the superiority at the point where it deemed it most necessary.[d]

THE COALITION AGAINST FRANCE

Never was the futility of coalitions more conspicuous than in the campaigns following that of 1792. We have seen how slowly Austria, Prussia, and the empire had formed their armed contingents in 1791, and with what hesitation — nearer akin to treason than prudence — the duke of Brunswick had invaded the French territory, and attacked the army of Dumouriez. Instead of surprising France whilst divided and disarmed, — of marching in columns of one or two hundred thousand men on Paris, by one of those numerous openings which nature has left in the frontiers, in the valleys of the Rhine, or by the plains of the north, — the duke of Brunswick, and after him the prince of Coburg, had wasted eighteen months in councils of war, in empty armaments, and timid manœuvres, always opposing to French battalions forces inferior, or at most, of equal strength, and only advancing to retreat.

The rivalry that existed in the cabinets contributed no less than the inefficiency of the generals, to afford France time for preparation. No real concert existed between them, and they contented themselves with preserving the decorum of war; with defending their own territories; threatening fortresses here and there, and combating in isolated bodies; suffering Dumouriez to hasten with his best troops from the deliverance of Champagne to the conquest of Belgium; beholding the fall of the throne, the trial of the king, the birth of the republic, the immolation of the queen, and the outbreaks at Paris that convulsed their very thrones, without any attempt to rally against the common danger. Whence arose this difference between the coalition and France? Because France was aroused by enthusiasm, and egotism fettered the limbs of the coalition. France arose, fought, and fell for that liberty, whose sanctity she felt, and of which she wished to be the apostle and martyr.

Poland, weakened by its last dissensions, was fast approaching the period of its dismemberment. Russia, Prussia, and Austria, more attentive to Poland than France, constantly watched each other, lest any one of the three powers should seize on the prey whilst the others were engaged with France. Russia, under pretext of observing the Turks, and stifling the revolution in southern Poland, sent no troops to join the coalition, but contented herself with despatching a fleet to the Baltic, to prevent neutral vessels from bringing provisions or iron into the French ports.

Since the victory of Neerwinden, the cabinet of Vienna and the prince of Coburg had been too much occupied in strengthening the Austrian power in Belgium, to follow up their success against France. Dampierre had succeeded Dumouriez. Having received orders from the convention to attack the Austrian army, posted between Maubeuge and St. Amand, Dampierre obeyed, though hopeless of success, and marched on an enemy protected by woods, barricades, and trenches. Five times did the attacking columns recoil before the troops of Clerfayt, the most energetic of Coburg's generals. At the sixth attack, Dampierre, at the head of a picked detachment, charged a redoubt. "Where are you going, father?" exclaimed his son, who acted as his aide-de-camp; "you are exposing yourself to certain death." "I know it, my child," replied his father; "but I prefer to fall on the field of honour than beneath the axe of the guillotine." Hardly had he uttered these words, when a cannon-ball carried away his thigh, and left him dead on the ground.

The prince of Coburg, stimulated in vain by Clerfayt and the duke of York, who commanded the Anglo-Hanoverian army, did not pursue

the French army, but suffered it again to take up the strong position of the camp of Cæsar. In twelve days the troops of the coalition might have encamped on the heights of Montmartre. But the cabinet of Berlin, occupied in humbling the Austrian influence in Germany, in sapping the empire, and appropriating Poland to itself, pursued the same vacillating policy which had timidly led its armies in Champagne. The duke of Brunswick, still at the head of the Prussian forces, contented himself with retaking Mainz; and his army, imposing, numerous, but almost stationary, resembled an army of observation rather than one in actual campaign. The king of Prussia, his eyes fixed on Poland, was in his camp. Lord Beauchamp came from London, to blame the indecision of this prince, and to obtain his signature to a treaty with England, by which the two powers secured their frontiers from France.

Suddenly the king of Prussia left his camp for Poland, and England alone persisted in maintaining the conquest with France. She had two motives for this — the rival of France on the seas, in the colonies, and the East Indies, disputing with the French vessels the navigation and the commerce of the sea, the destruction of the French fleet, and occupation of ports in the Mediterranean, formed a natural object of ambition, and promised too rich a spoil to be overlooked. On the other hand, although liberal theories had established themselves between the reflecting portion of the two nations, yet, as English liberty was entirely aristocratic, and French liberty declared itself daily more and more democratic, the British aristocracy was indignant and alarmed at the example of a victorious democracy who sought to root out aristocracy as it had done royalty.

Pitt, who was the personification of the genius of aristocracy of his country, was all powerful because he had been the first to perceive these perils. In vain did the more clamorous but less solid opposition, composed of Fox and his party, persist in blaming war and contesting the subsidies. Popular opinion abandoned these partisans of the French Revolution, since this revolution destroyed kings and queens, and proscribed its noblest citizens. Robespierre ruined the popularity of Fox, and the war against France was no longer a war of ambition or policy, but became social. Pitt obtained all he asked, because he was believed to be desirous of saving everything.

Pitt had for allies Spain, severed from the family bond by the dethronement of the Bourbons in France; Russia and Holland, who insured him Sweden and Denmark; Prussia, engaged by the treaty of the 14th of July; Austria, the empire; the greater number of the independent German princes; Naples, Venice, and lastly Turkey, who had refused, at his solicitation, to receive the French ambassador, Semonville. The Swiss cantons themselves, particularly Bern, excited by his agents, and indignant at the murder of their unfortunate children on the 10th of August, seized the French envoys, Maret and Semonville, and surrendered them to the Austrians. Thus, in spite of the internal dissensions of the coalition, England still maintained it rather in battle array than as a camp on the banks of the Rhine, and remunerated the efforts against France.

The duke of York, the king's son, a brave and skilful soldier, commanded, at the extremity of the prince of Coburg's line, the Anglo-Hungarian army, reinforced by some Austrian and Hessian troops. The only army capable of defending the convention was encamped before Arras; and the passage of the Somme could alone oppose the two hundred thousand men with which the prince of Coburg could march on Paris. Envoys from Vienna and Berlin deliberated with Pitt at London on the plan of the campaign; but instead of concentrating their forces, and marching on the Somme, they resolved on a

plan more in conformity with the dissension and uncertainty that prevailed in the cabinets. The siege of Dunkirk was resolved upon, and Admiral Maxbridge had orders to prepare to bombard the place with his squadron, whilst the duke of York attacked by land. The Anglo-Hanoverian army advanced to Furnes, and divided itself into two bodies, one of which, under the orders of the duke of York, attacked Dunkirk, whilst the other, under Marshal Freytag, occupied the little town of Hondschoote, and covered the besieging army. These two bodies of troops were at least 36,000 strong, and were joined to the forces of the prince of Coburg by the *corps d'armée* of the prince of Orange, consisting of 16,000 men.

DUNKIRK, HONDSCHOOTE, AND WATTIGNIES (1793 A.D.)

General Houchard, commander-in-chief of the French army of the north, received orders from Carnot to raise the siege of Dunkirk at any sacrifice. This city, although incapable of holding out any length of time, performed prodigies of valour to avoid the humiliation of surrendering to the English. Jourdan, *chef-de-bataillon* a few days before, and now created general by Carnot, commanded a corps of 10,000 men, encamped on the heights of Cassel, five leagues from Dunkirk. Informed of the intended attack on the town, he hastened thither, superintended the preparations for defence, and then returned to Cassel, leaving General Souham to command Dunkirk. An officer, whose name was destined at a future day to become illustrious, Lazare Hoche, who had already attracted the notice of Carnot by his ardour and intelligence, aided General Souham in the defence of the town. Carnot detached 15,000 of the best troops of the army of the Rhine, and sent them to Houchard's force, to drill and support the raw recruits, of whom his troops were almost entirely composed. Houchard advanced at the head of 40,000 men against the English line. On his passage through Cassel, he united the corps of Jourdan with his own, and marched on Hondschoote, where the duke of York and Marshal Freytag had fortified themselves. The duke of York, Freytag, and Walmoden felt the most perfect security in the strength of their position and the number of their troops.

On the 6th of August the outposts of the two armies met at Rexpoëde, a large village between Cassel and Hondschoote. Jourdan, dispersing everything before him, had advanced as far as this village, and halted there for the night. Jourdan, after vainly attempting to carry the village, returned to join Houchard and the representatives at Rembek; Walmoden retreated with his division on Hondschoote. On the 8th, Houchard attacked.

On the French side Collaud commanded the right, Jourdan the left, Houchard the centre, and Vandamme the advanced guard. A redoubt, with eleven pieces of cannon, commanded the town and swept the roads of Bergues and Blenheim, whilst another redoubt was thrown upon the route de Warem, and every approach flooded. To carry these redoubts it was necessary to march for ten minutes up to the waist in water, and exposed to the fire of the artillery and sharpshooters, securely posted behind the walls and hedges. Houchard, who carefully avoided exposing his troops, lost time in a series of formal attacks, which, whilst they compromised nothing, ruined everything.

The representative of the people, Levasseur, a brave patriot, although unskilled in military affairs, unceasingly demanded explanations of all his orders from the general, threatening to deprive him of the command, if he did not obey him. On horseback, at the head of the troops, and conspicuous

by his tricoloured scarf and floating plume, Levasseur made the soldiers blush and the generals tremble. He pointed with one hand to Hondschoote, with the other to the guillotine. Jourdan himself led an attack. More than four thousand men fell, dead or wounded, around the redoubts, and the redoubts themselves, stormed at length, ceased their fire only when the last artilleryman was bayoneted at his gun. The English fell back in good order.

Walmoden, attacked and forced on every side except Belgium, withdrew his shattered forces to Furnes, whilst the duke of York, who had been present at Hondschoote, galloped to Dunkirk to raise the siege. Houchard, in spite of the observations of Jourdan and the representatives, who entreated him to follow up his victory, by pursuing the Hanoverians on the road to Furnes, remained inactive for two days. This simple manœuvre would have placed the army of the duke of York between the ramparts of Dunkirk and the army of Houchard. Not an Englishman would have escaped, for Hoche was in Dunkirk, and in two hours these sandhills would have been the Caudine Forks of England. Houchard, however, did not or would not see this, and suffered the duke of York to march quietly along a slip of sand which connects Dunkirk with Furnes, and join Walmoden and the prince of Orange in Belgium.

The news of the battle of Hondschoote filled Paris with joy, but the convention reproached the victorious general with his victory as a treason; and the commissioners of the army of the north, Hentz, Peyssard, and Duquesnoy, sent Houchard to the revolutionary tribunal. The unfortunate Houchard was condemned to death, and met his fate with the intrepidity of a soldier and the calmness of innocence. His death taught the other generals that victory would not always save them from the scaffold; and that there was no safety but complete obedience to the orders of the representatives of the people.

The military operations on other frontiers, until January, 1794, were confined to the occupation of Savoy by Kellermann, and Nice by Biron, an unfortunate campaign in the Pyrenees against General Ricardos, but in which the aged French general, Dagobert, in his seventy-fifth year, covered himself with glory; the nomination of Jourdan, to replace Houchard, at the army of the north, and his manœuvres to cover Maubeuge, threatened by the coalition, to whom the capture of Maubeuge would open the approaches to Paris. Maubeuge, defended by a strong garrison and an entrenched camp of 25,000 men, was decimated by famine and disease. One hundred and twenty thousand men besieged it. General Ferrand commanded the camp, General Chancel the town. The patriotism of the soldiers and inhabitants could only have maintained the defence of this gate of France a few hours longer, when Jourdan and Carnot announced their approach by the sound of their cannon.

Eighty thousand men, under the prince of Coburg, entrenched in a position of which Wattignies was the centre, awaited the French, who attacked them in five columns, at ten o'clock in the morning, on the 15th of November. The French were repulsed at several points; and Carnot accused Jourdan of cowardice, who, stung to madness, rushed at the head of one of the divisions, to the attack of an almost inaccessible platform, commanded by the batteries of Clerfayt; his whole column was mowed down by their fire, and he was well-nigh the only survivor. Carnot, after acknowledging his injustice, left him at liberty to follow his own plan. Jourdan formed 25,000 men into a compact body, which enclosed in its centre the flying artillery, opening to admit of its playing, closing to cover the guns, and thus carrying a moving

citadel with it to the summit of the platform. This formidable column swept all before it, and the imperial cavalry in vain endeavoured to break the other columns. One alone, that of General Gratien, was thrown into disorder, but the representative, Duquesnoy, deprived Gratien of his command, rallied the soldiers, and returned to the combat. Wattignies was carried; and the cannon of Maubeuge replied with joyful salvos to the thunder of the guns of Carnot and Jourdan. The battle of Wattignies would have been more decisive, if the 25,000 men of the camp of Maubeuge, under Ferrand, had prevented the prince of Coburg and Clerfayt from repassing the Sambre. The soldiers in the camp, and Chancel, who commanded the town, desired it, but want of orders and excessive prudence prevented Ferrand from consenting. A victim was necessary to the convention, and Chancel mounted the scaffold.

At the army of the Rhine, the zealous representatives of the people had replaced Custine by Beauharnais, Beauharnais by Landremont, Landremont by Carlen, who but a month before was only a captain, and Carlen by Pichegru. This army, consisting of 45,000 men, defended the entrance of Alsace by the fortified lines of Weissenburg. Wurmser, the oldest but the most daring of all the generals of the empire, surprised these lines owing to the incapacity of Carlen. This general, threatened on the other side by the duke of Brunswick, retired to the heights of Zabern and Strasburg, and Wurmser, who was born in Alsace, entered in triumph Hagenau, his country. A secret treaty for the surrender of Strasburg was negotiated between Wurmser and certain principal families, and the only stipulation was the Austrian general should occupy it in the name of Louis XVII. This plot, which was discovered in time, brought to the scaffold seventeen of the principal inhabitants of Strasburg, some convicted and others accused of royalism. The fort Vauban was stormed by the Austrians, and Landau could not hold out much longer. Saint-Just and Lebas were sent to Alsace, to intimidate treason or cowardice by death. Pichegru and Hoche also arrived, the one to assume the command of the army of the Rhine, the other (though only five-and-twenty), that of the army of the Moselle. "We shall be commanded as Frenchmen should be," said the letters from the army, after the troops had been reviewed by the two generals: "Pichegru possesses the gravity of genius; Hoche is youthful as the Revolution, robust as the people, and his glance is proud and aspiring as that of the eagle." These two new leaders fully justified the enthusiasm of the army.

Hoche — young, handsome, and martial, a hero of antiquity by his look, figure, and courage, a modern hero by the study, the reading, the meditation that gave moral strength, of an humble family, yet born to a great destiny — had enlisted into the French guards, and did his comrades' duty for half their pay, which he employed in the purchase of treatises on warfare and history. Sent to Paris, as aide-de-camp to General Leveneur, after the flight of Dumouriez, he was summoned before the committee of public safety, to inform them of the precise state of the army, and astonished the members of it by the clearness of his answers, the greatness of his conceptions, and the martial eloquence of his language. This interview, in which the statesmen discerned the warrior, procured him the rank of adjutant-general; and the defence of Dunkirk won him the notice of Carnot, and the rank of general of brigade; and his skilful manœuvres before Furnes and Ypres, to repair the faults of Houchard, caused him to be at once appointed to command the army of the Moselle. Hoche had but one defect — the feeling of his own superiority degenerated occasionally into contempt for his colleagues. In

a revolution, where everything was accessible to ambition and genius, it is impossible to say what Hoche might have attained had not death checked his career.

THE DESTRUCTION OF LYONS

In La Vendée the different generals sent by the committee of public safety wasted their troops in a civil war, which sprang up beneath their feet; they gained solitary battles, and lost the campaign. Two other insurrections also broke out at Lyons and Marseilles, in the very heart of the republic, and attracted the attention, the force, and the desperate energy of the convention.

Like Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Toulon, Lyons had enthusiastically adopted the doctrines of the Girondists, and the majority shuddered at the names of Robespierre, Danton, and the Mountain. The rich beheld in this party, in the convention, the spoliators of their fortune, the people the destroyers of their religion. Commerce decreased, luxury was proscribed; and nothing was fabricated but arms. From the day on which the republic assailed its banks, its markets, its factories, and its priests, Lyons no longer recognised the republic. The city began to mingle its complaints with those of the royalists, who flocked from all the adjacent provinces to take shelter within its walls. This change of popular feeling irritated still more the threatening but overawed Jacobins of Lyons.

There was at this time in the city a man of the most dangerous class during popular convulsions — a fanatic of the impossible. His name was Chalier, and, like Marat, he had been attracted from a distant land by the blaze of the Revolution. He was born in Piedmont, or Savoy. Designed for the church, Chalier had been brought up by the monks at Lyons; and it seemed as though the fate of Lyons, already so like that of Florence, was to become still more analogous by possessing an agitator between Savonarola and Marat. He was driven out of Italy for propagating revolutionary doctrines, and thus attracted the notice of Robespierre, Marat, Camille Desmoulins, and Fauchet, and he came to Lyons to found under their auspices a club, whose ardour he kindled and incited by his wild and mystic discourses.

The morning after the massacres of September, a small band of assassins had murdered eleven officers of the royal Pologne regiment, who had been imprisoned the previous evening on suspicion of royalism. The entrances to all the prisons of Lyons were heaped with dead bodies, and these corpses were suspended on the next day to the trees in the public walk of Bellecour, and linked together by chains of human limbs, to strike terror into the aristocrats. To add to this excitement that of terror, Chalier sent for a guillotine from Paris, and permanently erected it. He proposed the establishment of a revolutionary tribunal; then, seizing a crucifix, he dashed it to the earth, and trampled on it.[e] The Girondists rose to resist his blood-thirsty followers and, after several street battles, overcame the Jacobins, and sent Chalier to be the first victim of his own guillotine. This happening just as the Girondists were brought to death in Paris, left Lyons in desperate plight. An open revolt was the only hope, and the city appointed the count de Précy its commander.[a]

The convention, on its side, accepted the struggle with the unbending determination of a power which does not yield before the amputation of a member to save the body. Its country was in its eyes not a city, but a principle. It ordered Kellermann, general-in-chief of the army of the Alps, to

leave his frontiers and concentrate his forces round Lyons. Kellermann, who disputed with Dumouriez the glory of Valmy, bore at this moment in the south the whole weight of the Austrians, the Allobroges, and the Piedmontese, whose forces crossed the other side of the Alps. With a small body of troops Kellermann bore down all resistance. Kellermann, pressed by the representatives of the people, Gautier, Nioche, and Dubois-Crancé, completed the blockade of the city. The committee of public safety despatched Couthon and Maignet to overwhelm Lyons beneath the battalions of patriotic volunteers, whom the Terror caused to spring from the earth at the voice of the representatives.

The besieging army sat down before Lyons in the commencement of August, and was divided into two camps. The whole of the inhabitants were divided into two bodies, one of whom defended the ramparts; whilst the other checked the progress of the flames, carried ammunition and food to the troops, bore the wounded to the hospital, and buried the slain. Kellermann asked to be allowed to return to the Alps. Doppet succeeded him, and at length Lyons fell in October. Couthon's first care was to command that the persons and property of the inhabitants should be scrupulously regarded. Not the slightest tumult or violence was permitted; and peasants from Auvergne, who hurried to the scene of hoped-for plunder, bringing carts, mules, and sacks to carry off the spoils found in the richest city of France, were dismissed empty-handed, and sent back murmuring and discontented to their mountains. Lyons was selected as an example of the severity of the republic. No longer satisfied with punishing individuals, Terror desired to make the punishment of an entire city at once an example and a warning to all others. The Jacobins, friends of Chalier, long compromised, both by the royalists and Girondists of Lyons, came forth from their hiding-places calling loudly for vengeance on the representatives, and demanding of the convention that their enemies should at last be given up to them. For some time the representatives sought to restrain this fury, but finally they were compelled to yield to it, contenting themselves by reducing it to order by the institution of revolutionary tribunals, and decrees of extermination.

In this matter, as well, indeed, as in all the acts of the reign of terror, the odium of all the blood that was shed has been thrown upon one individual. The confusion of the moment, the despair of the dying, and the resentment of the survivors made it difficult to judge who was guilty of the deed, and not unfrequently handed down for the execration of posterity the names of the most innocent. History has its chances, as well as the battle-field, and absolves or sacrifices many, whose character it is the work of after ages to place aright before the world.

Thus then were all the crimes committed by the republic of Lyons laid to the charge of Couthon, merely because he chanced to be the friend and confidant of Robespierre in the suppression of federalism, and in the victory of the united republicans over civil anarchy; but a careful examination of dates, facts, and words, impartially considered, will effectually do away with so unfair a charge. Couthon entered Lyons rather as a peacemaker than an executioner, and opposed with all the earnestness his position permitted the excess to which the Jacobins carried their vengeance. He strove against Dubois-Crancé, Collot d'Herbois, and Dorfeuille, to moderate the wild fury of these fierce spirits, and was by them denounced to the Mountain and the Jacobins as one who prevaricated and showed an undue indulgence to their enemies. Finally he withdrew ere the first sentence of death was passed, in

order to escape being either a witness or accomplice of the blood shed by the representatives of the implacable party of the convention.

In the meanwhile the Mountain and the Jacobins of Paris, incensed, by means of the accusations of Dubois-Crancé, at what they considered the dilatoriness of Couthon, urged the committee of public safety to strike a blow against the second city of the republic, which should serve as a warning to future revolutionists. Barrère, at all times ready to side with the most influential party, on the 12th of November ascended the rostrum, and read to the convention, in the name of the committee of public safety, a decree, or rather *Plébeide*, against Lyons. "Let Lyons be buried beneath her own ruins," exclaimed Barrère, "and let the plough pass over the site of her edifices, save those devoted to the reception of the poor and needy — workshops, hospitals, or buildings set apart for public instruction. The very name of the city shall perish amid its ruins, and it shall henceforward be known only by the appellation of the 'free city.' This simple inscription shall tell the whole history: 'Lyons took up arms against liberty — Lyons has ceased to be a city!'" The severity of this decree cast terror throughout Lyons. Couthon himself, while affecting to approve of it, believed it impracticable, and again allowed a lapse of twelve days ere he attempted to carry it into execution. This delay enabled the citizens to fly in great numbers. He was superseded by Collot d'Herbois and Fouché, the new proconsuls appointed by the Mountain. Collot d'Herbois was filled with a ferocious vanity which saw no glory save in excess, and whose fury was tempered by no moderation. Fouché was believed to be a fanatic; he was only a skilful dissimulator.

The sacred symbols of religion were destroyed, and the churches profaned by impious and indecent songs, dances, and ceremonies. "We have yesterday founded the religion of patriotism," wrote Collot. The heads of ten members of the municipality fell next day, and a mine, exploding, destroyed some of the finest buildings in the city. The cells were choked with prisoners. Whilst proprietors and merchants were perishing, the houses were destroyed beneath the hammer. Shopkeepers, lodgers, families, expelled from the proscribed houses, had scarcely time to leave their houses, to carry off the old, the infirm, and children, to other residences. Every day the pickaxe was seen attacking staircases, or tilers unroofing houses. Whilst the alarmed inhabitants were throwing their furniture out of the windows, and mothers carried the cradles of their children over the ruined rafters, twenty thousand pioneers of Auvergne and the lower Alps were employed in razing the abodes to the ground. The cellars and foundations were blown up with gunpowder. The pay of the demolishers amounted to 400,000 francs for each décade; and the demolitions cost 15,000,000 francs to destroy a capital of more than 300,000,000 worth of edifices! Hundreds of workmen perished buried beneath the walls that fell in, having been recklessly undermined.

Eight or ten condemned died every day, on leaving the tribunal, on the scaffold erected permanently in front of the steps leading to the town-hall. Water and sand, spread every evening after the executions around this sewer of human blood, did not suffice to cleanse the earth. A red and fetid mud, constantly trampled by a people thirsting to see their fellow-creatures die, covered the square and reeked in the air. Around these actual shambles of human flesh there was a scent of death. The blood, trickling through the planks, flowed into a ditch ten feet deep, which carried it to the Rhone, together with the filth of the neighbourhood. More than six

thousand prisoners were at a time locked up in the dépôts of the guillotine.

All the notable and illustrious citizens whom Couthon had allowed to escape were brought back. On the other side of the bridge, in the lower plain of the Brotteaux, had been dug a double ditch in the marshy soil, between two rows of willows. Sixty-four condemned persons, handcuffed two and two, were placed in a line in this alley, beside their open sepulchre. Three pieces of cannon, loaded with ball, were placed at the extremity of the avenue. Right and left, detachments of dragoons, sword in hand, seemed waiting the signal to charge. The victims sang in chorus the hymn which had led them into battle. They seemed to seek in the words of this, their last song, the forgetfulness of the blow which was about to strike them :

"To die for one's country,
Is the happiest and most enviable fate!"

The artillerymen listened, with lighted match in hand, to these dying men singing their own death-song. Dorfeuille allowed the voices to finish slowly the grave modulations of the last verse, then raising his hand as a signal, the three cannon exploded at once. The smoke concealed the guns, and for a moment hovered over the ground : drums beat to stifle all cries. The mob pressed forward to contemplate the effect of the carnage. The artillerymen had been deceived ; the undulations of the line of victims had allowed the balls to deviate, and twenty prisoners had fallen beneath the fire, dragging down with them their living companions, who were thus associated in their dying throes, and inundated with their blood. Shrieks, moans, fearful gestures, came from this confused heap of mutilated members, carcases, and survivors. The artillerymen then loaded with grape, and fired ; but even then the massacre was incomplete. A heart-rending cry, heard across the Rhone, even into the city, rose from this field of agony. Some limbs still palpitated, some hands were still extended towards the spectators, imploring the final blow. The soldiers shuddered. "Forward, dragoons," cried Dorfeuille, "charge!" The troopers, at this command, put spurs to their horses, who dashed forward at a gallop, and with the point of the sabre and pistol-shots they killed the last victim. This scene of horror and agony was protracted for more than two hours!

A sullen murmur of indignation hailed the recital of this horrid scene in the city. The people felt dishonoured; and compared itself to the most cruel tyrants of Rome, or the executioners of St. Bartholomew. The representatives stifled this murmur by a proclamation which commanded that all should approve, and declared pity to be conspiracy. Citizens, even the most elegant females, then affected revolutionary rigour, and concealed their horror beneath the mask of adulation. Fouché, Collot d'Herbois, and Dorfeuille sought to stifle remorse.

Two hundred and ten Lyonnese prisoners were next led out. A long rope was extended from one willow to another. They fastened each prisoner to this rope by the end of the cord which confined his hands behind his back. Three soldiers were placed four paces off in face of each victim, and the cavalry placed in small bodies behind. At the word Fire! the 630 soldiers at once directed three bullets against every breast. A cloud of smoke covered the scene for a moment, and then lifting, there were seen, besides the corpses strewn on the ground or hanging to the cord, more than one hundred young men still erect. The soldiers, with great reluctance, finished with the bayonet and the butt-end of their muskets the victims

expiring in the causeway, and falling night extinguished their dying groans. Next day, when the grave-diggers came to bury the dead, several bodies still palpitated, and the pioneers killed them outright with blows of the pickaxe before they covered them over with the blood-stained mould.

Montbrison, St. Étienne, St. Chamond, all Lyonnese colonies, were the theatres of the same atrocities or supplied victims. The same impatience for death seemed to possess executioners and victims : the one had the frenzy of murder, the other the enthusiasm of death. The horror of living had removed the horror of death. Young girls and children begged to fall beside their fathers and kinsfolk thus shot down; and daily the judges had to refuse the supplications of despair, imploring the penalty of death, less fearful than the punishment of surviving. Every day they granted or refused these requests.

The executions *en masse* only ceased in consequence of the indignant refusal of the soldiers to be converted into executioners. The corpses that covered the banks of the Rhone threatened to cause a pestilence, and the adjoining towns and villages complained of the infected state of the air and the water. Collot d'Herbois, recalled to Paris upon the first expressions of indignation called forth by these massacres, justified himself to the Jacobins. "We are called Anthropophagi," said he : "they are aristocrats who give us this appellation."

THE SIEGE OF TOULON

But whilst the smoking ruins of Lyons were quenched in rivers of blood, the torch of civil war was kindled at Toulon. Toulon, the most important port of the republic, had passed rapidly from the excess of Jacobinism, to disgust and abhorrence of the Revolution. The presence of naval officers, almost all of whom were royalists, the influence of the priests, the outrages and insults offered by the Jacobins to religion, the indignation caused by the excesses the army of Carteaux had committed at Marseilles, and everything urged Toulon on to an insurrection.

The English fleet under Admiral Hood, which was cruising in the Mediterranean, learned all these particulars by secret correspondence with the royalists of Toulon. This fleet consisted of six vessels of the line and twenty-five frigates. Admiral Hood presented himself to the Toulonese as an ally and liberator, rather than as an enemy. He promised to guard the city, the harbour, and the fleet, not as a conquest, but as a deposit which he would hand over to Louis XVI's successor, as soon as France should have repressed her interior tyrants. The opinion of the Toulonese passed, with the rapidity of the wind, from Jacobinism to federalism, from federalism to royalism, from royalism to defection. Ten thousand fugitives of Marseilles driven into Toulon by the terrors of the vengeance of the republic, the shelter of the walls, the batteries of the vessels, the combined English and Spanish fleets, ready to protect the insurrection — gave to the Toulonese the idea of this crime against their country.

Of the two admirals who commanded the French fleet in the port of Toulon, one, Admiral Trogoff, conspired with the royalists ; the other, Admiral Saint-Julien, endeavoured to maintain the republicanism of his crews. Thus divided in feeling, the fleet was neutralised by opposite tendencies. It could only follow, by being itself torn by contrary factions, the movement given to it by the conquering party. Placed between an insurgent city and a blockaded sea, it must be inevitably crushed either by the cannon of the fortress, the guns of the English, or by both fires at once. The population of

Toulon, when so many opposing elements combined at once, rose at the arrival of the advance-guard of Carteaux, with an unanimity which shut out every idea of remorse. They closed the Jacobin clubs, destroyed their president, imprisoned the representatives of the people, Bayle and Beauvais, sent within their walls, and called in the English, Spanish, and Neapolitans.

At the sight of the enemy's squadrons Beauvais committed suicide in his prison. The French fleet, with the exception of a few vessels which Admiral Saint-Julien still kept for some days to their duty, hoisted the white flag. The Toulonese, English, and Neapolitans united, to the number of 15,000 men, armed the forts and approaches to the city, against the troops of the republic. Carteaux, advancing from Marseilles at the head of 4,000 men, drove back the enemy's advance-guard from the gorges of Ollioules. General Lapoype, detached from the army of Nice with 7,000 men, invested Toulon on the opposite side. As soon as Lyons allowed the troops at the disposal of the committee of public safety to be at liberty, Carnot hastened to direct them against Toulon, sending thither General Doppet the conqueror, and Fouché, the exterminator of Lyons.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE
(1769–1821)

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

A captain of artillery, sent by Carnot to the army of the Alps, was stopped on his way, to replace the commandant of artillery, Donmartin, who had been wounded, at the army of Toulon. This young man was Napoleon Bonaparte.[1] His fortune awaited him there. His fellow-countryman Salicetti presented him to Carteaux. In a few words and in a few days he displayed his genius, and was the soul of all operations. Predestined to make force surmount opinion, and the army superior to the people, he was first seen in the smoke of a battery, striking with the same blow anarchy in Toulon and his enemes in the roadstead.

[1 The most remarkable event in the military history of 1793 is the siege of Toulon, not so much from its importance, as from its first bringing to light the talents of Napoleon Bonaparte. He was born in Corsica, of a good family, in 1769, and educated at the artillery school of Brienne. As all the students of this establishment, and, indeed, all intended to hold rank in the army under the ancient régime, were noble, the officers emigrated at the Revolution; Bonaparte and three comrades being the only ones that remained of his regiment. The place of an officer of artillery could not be supplied from the lower and uninformed ranks of life, as those of the line were in France; and thus he found himself, at the age of twenty-four, with the rank of major, and the chief of his arm before Toulon. Two successive generals appointed to command the siege were totally ignorant of their profession. The members of the convention present with the army were self-sufficient, and still less capable of conducting a siege. The task fell upon young Bonaparte, who had not only to devise good counsel, but to make it prevail. The latter he effected by reports and written plans, that proved his talents.]

His future was in this position: a military genius bursting forth in the fire of a civil war, to seize on the soldier, illustrate the sword, stifle the utterance of opinion, quench the Revolution, and compel liberty to retrograde for a century! Glory, vast but deplorable, which posterity will not judge like his contemporaries!

Dugommier had replaced Carteaux. He called a council of war, at which Bonaparte was present. This young captain, instantly promoted to the rank of a *chef-de-bataillon*, reorganised the artillery, moved the batteries nearer to the city, discovered the heart of the position, directed all his blows thither, and, neglecting all else, went right forward. The English general O'Hara, leaving Fort Malbosquet with 6,000 men, fell into a snare laid for him by Bonaparte, was wounded and taken prisoner. Fort Malbosquet, which commands the roadstead, was attacked by two columns in spite of the orders of the representatives. Bonaparte and Dugommier were the first who entered the breach—their victory was their justification. "General," said Bonaparte to Dugommier, broken down by fatigue and age, "go and sleep, we have just taken Toulon." Admiral Hood saw at daybreak the French batteries bristling over the embrasures and ready to sweep the roadstead. The winds of autumn were blowing a gale, the sea ran high, the sky was lowering—all betokened that the coming storms of winter would prevent the English from getting away from the roadstead.

At the close of day the enemy's boats towed the fire-ship *Vulcan* into the centre of the French fleet. Immense quantities of combustibles were piled up in the magazines, dockyards, and arsenals. Some English, with a lighted match in their hands, awaited the signal for firing. The clock of the port struck ten o'clock—a rocket was let off from the centre of the city, which rose and then fell in sparks. This was the signal, and the match was applied to the train of powder. The arsenal, the storehouses, ship timber, pitch and tar, flax, the ships' stores, of the fleet and this naval dépôt, were all destroyed in a few hours. This blaze, which engulfed half the marine of France, for a whole night lighted up the waves of the Mediterranean, the sides of the mountains, the camps of the representatives, and the decks of the English vessels. The inhabitants of Toulon, abandoned for some hours to the vengeance of the republicans, wandered about the quays. The silence which the horror of fire cast over the two camps was only interrupted by the explosion of the powder magazines, of sixteen vessels, and twenty frigates, whose decks and guns were projected into the air before they were swallowed up by the waves.

The report of the departure of the combined squadrons, and the surrender of the city, had already spread among the populace. Fifteen thousand Toulonese and Marseillese refugees, men, women, children, old people, wounded, infirm, had left their abodes, and hastened to the beach, where they struggled for places in the boats which would take them on board the English, Spanish, and Neapolitan vessels. The raging sea and the fire swept between the waves rendered the conveyance of fugitives more dangerous and slow. Every instant the cries from a boat that sank, and the dead bodies flung ashore, disheartened the sailors. The burning fragments of the arsenal and the fleet rained down upon this multitude, and struck numbers to the earth. A battery of the republican army was firing shot and shell at the port and quay. Wives lost their husbands, daughters their mothers, mothers their children, in the confusion. Touching and terrible dramas were buried beneath the horrors of that night. It recalled the ancient generations of Asia Minor or Greece, abandoning *en masse* the land of their birth, and

bearing away upon the seas their riches and their gods, by the flames of a city in conflagration. About seven thousand inhabitants of Toulon, exclusive of the officers and seamen, found shelter on board the English and Spanish vessels. The crime of having delivered over the stores and arms of France to the foe, and of having hoisted the flag of royalty, was not to be forgiven. They uttered from the crests of the waves a last adieu to the hills of Provence, lighted up by the flames which consumed their roofs and olive trees.

The English weighed anchor, carrying off the vessels they had not destroyed by fire, and put to sea. The refugees of Toulon were nearly all conveyed to Leghorn, and established themselves at Tuscany. Their families still dwell there, and we hear French names of that period amongst the foreign appellations on the hills of Leghorn, Florence, and Pisa.

Next day, December 20th, 1793, the representatives entered Toulon at the head of the republican army. Dugommier, pointing to the city in ashes, and the houses nearly empty of inhabitants, entreated the conventionalists to content themselves with this vengeance, and to suppose generously that all the guilty had gone into exile, and thus spare the rest. The representatives despised the magnanimity of the aged general—their office was not only to vanquish, but to terrify. The guillotine entered Toulon with the artillery of the army, and blood flowed as it had at Lyons. Fouché urged on the punishments. The convention, by a decree, struck out the name of the city of traitors. "Let the shell and mine," said Barrère, "crush every roof and merchant in Toulon; let there remain only in their place a military post, peopled by the defenders of the republic."[e]

This threat, as in the case of Lyons, was not actually carried out, and both cities still prosper. Before taking up the campaigns of 1794, we may review as a whole the insurrection which had been all this year devastating the western portion of France. The department of La Vendée, a territory of some 2,500 miles, was strongly royalist in sentiment.[a]

THE CIVIL WAR IN LA VENDÉE

That country could neither understand nor accept the Revolution. There the feudal régime had always been gentle. The understanding existing between the gentry and peasants did not resemble the general condition in France; there was between them a union unknown elsewhere. The landlord behaved paternally to his peasants, going to the weddings of their children and drinking with their guests. On Sundays there was dancing in the castle yard, in which the ladies joined. When the wild boar or wolf was to be hunted, the village priest notified the fact to the peasants in his sermon; each one took up his gun and gladly betook himself to the appointed place; the huntsmen posted the marksmen, who conformed strictly to any such orders as they received. Subsequently they were led to battle in the same way and with equal compliance.

In 1789 the inhabitants of the Bocage had already noticed with fear and regret all the changes which could not help but disturb their happiness, rather than add to it. When the population of the Bocage saw that they were being robbed of their priests who understood their manners and dialect, and that they were to be replaced by strangers, they refused to go any longer to the parish services. The newly sworn priests were insulted and ignored. After the 10th of August, 1792, measures increased in severity; the unsworn priests were hunted and persecuted with more ferocity; some churches were

even closed. The peasants assembled armed with guns, scythes, and pitchforks to attend mass in the country and to defend their ministers against being carried off, according to Madame de la Rochejaquelein.[f] The execution of the king brought their exasperation to a crisis.[1]

The movement began at St. Florent, a little town on the Loire. On the 10th of March, 1793, the young men of that canton had been called out to fulfil a decree demanding the raising of 300,000 men. They came, but resolved not to obey, mutinied, drove off the gendarmes, and pillaged the town-hall. This done, they retired peaceably to their homes, when a carrier and woolhawker, Jacques Cathelineau, changed their resolution.

He put himself at the head of these patriots. The courage and warmth of his words carried away the young men; soon his band was more than a hundred strong. Then he decided upon attacking a republican position held by twenty-four men at Jallais with one cannon. The position was taken. Prisoners were made; the cannon was taken possession of and christened "Missionary" by the peasants; arms and horses were also captured.

"Encouraged by this success,' says Madame de la Rochejacquelein,[f] "Cathelineau undertook on the same day an attack upon Chemillé where there were two hundred republicans and two pieces of artillery. The rebels were already more than four hundred strong; they discharged a volley, threw themselves on the enemy, and achieved a speedy and complete victory."

François Athanase Charette
(1763–1796)

There was now an army, and the gentry hastened to place themselves at the head of it. Lescure, Bonchamps, d'Elbée, La Rochejaquelein, and Charette did not disdain to associate with the popular leaders. The nature of the country lent itself to resistance. La Vendée was divided into two parts: the *Bocage* or woodland and the *Marais* or marsh. The *Marais*, which extended most towards the sea, presented a species of desert intersected with canals.

By June, the month of the Girondists' downfall, the Vendeans had already made great strides. They had taken Fonten-le-Comte. They held Saumur,

[1 On this generally accepted theory Stephens[k] has this comment: "The movement, which is known as the Vendean rebellion, and which has been attributed to the highest motives of religion and loyalty, was really by no means so romantic as it has generally been represented. The excitement in the departments formed out of the old provinces of Brittany, Anjou, and Poitou caused by the civil constitution of the clergy was not greater than it had been in other districts of France; but the clergy in these provinces were far more unanimous in refusing to take the oath, and therefore it was less possible for the constitutional bishops of these departments to find substitutes for the former clergy. Very much also has often been said of the affection

an important post which gave them command of the passage of the Loire and yielded twenty-four pieces of artillery, thousands of muskets, and much powder and saltpetre. The prisoners amounted to 11,000; they were disarmed and almost all liberated. From that moment the convention took energetic steps and despatched 30,000 federals against the Vendeans. This was civil war. Cathelineau was unanimously elected general, and illustrious gentlemen gave way gladly to the humble peasant. The army became more regulated, and for two reasons directed its march towards the sea to form a juncture with the émigrés and the English; they first attacked Sables and then Nantes.*g*

But now, by violent measures, the convention triumphed over its enemies; the army of Calvados was put to flight at Vernon, and at Caen the insurgents made a solemn recantation; Bordeaux, Toulon, and Lyons fell in succession before the arms of the republic. La Vendée alone continued a desperate and terrible struggle in the cause of the altar and the throne. Driven back from the attack on Nantes, where they lost the bold Cathelineau, (June 29th), the Vendeans retired behind the Loire and successively defeated the republican generals Biron, Rossignol, and Canclaux. At last seventeen thousand men of the ancient garrison of Mainz, reputed the flower of the army, were taken to La Vendée; Kléber commanded them. Léchelle was named general-in-chief, and the royalists, after having defeated Kléber and the men from Mainz, in one battle, suffered four consecutive defeats at Châtillon (July 3rd) and at Cholet (October 17th); their principal leaders, Lescure, Bonchamps, and D'Elbée, received mortal wounds on these bloody days. Surrounded on every side in La Vendée, the insurgents asked aid of England, who insisted, before granting help, that they should seize a seaport.

Eighty thousand Vendeans left their devastated country, and marched to Granville; repulsed before this town for want of artillery, and defeated at Le Mans, they were destroyed in trying to cross the Loire at Savenay (December 23rd, 1793). Charette continued the war; the isle of Noirmoutiers was taken from him. The Achilles of La Vendée, Henry de la Rochejacquelein, was killed March 4th, 1794, by a soldier whose life he had spared; his death was the finishing stroke which made the republicans master of the country. A system of extermination immediately set in. La Vendée, vanquished, was surrounded by General Turreau; with sixteen entrenched camps and twelve marching columns, known under the name of "the infernal columns," they overran this unhappy district, carrying sword and flame in all directions.*h*

"THE IMMORTAL CAMPAIGN OF 1794"

Carnot saw plainly that it would be impossible for France to sustain for long the prodigious efforts she was making, and he knew, in the present situation, audacity was wisdom.

But Pichegru was not Hoche; he neither showed sufficient activity in preparations for action, nor sufficient promptitude in the execution. It was

felt by the peasants of these provinces for their lords, and the way in which they followed them during this rebellion against the convention; but careful examination of the history of the rebellion shows that it was not until the populace had gained some success by themselves, under their own leaders, that the gentry of Poitou came to the front to lead the peasants. It may safely be affirmed that religious and political reasons had very little to do with the Vendean rebellion. The attempt to enforce the conscription on March 10th was followed by a general rising among the peasants of the five departments of Brittany, and the three northern departments of Anjou and Poitou. In the beginning the movement resembled that of 1789, for castles were again stormed and archives burned. The same men who had led the risings of 1789 again led the risings of 1793, and the peasants were no more moved by religious motives in 1793 than in 1789."]

the enemy who now took the initiative, and the enemy had conceived vast projects. They purposed taking positions upon the Sambre at Landrecies, and before Maubeuge, which they had failed to do the preceding autumn, and march from thence upon the Oise, by way of Guise and Laon to Paris. The army which marched upon Paris would be protected upon its right flank by the inundation of Flanders, where they had opened the sluices, and upon its left flank by the Prussian army, which they had called from the Rhine to the Maas and the Sambre. An English and Austrian corps was to land in La Vendée, and to march upon Paris with the Vendean insurgents. "The allies," said the émigré Rivarol, wittily, "are always behindhand in ideas, in time, and in their army." The plan of the allies, in reality, would have been a good one in 1793, but it was a year too late!

The Prussian general, who commanded some sixty thousand men near Mainz, refused to desert the Rhine in order to go to the Maas. The great Austrian army, with the English and Dutch, tried to co-operate; there were 195,000 men to oppose to 180,000 of the French armies under Pichegru.

The emperor Francis II commanded the great allied army. Like Pitt, he opposed terror to terror. Upon his arrival in Belgium, he decreed that "whosoever should be convicted of conspiring to propagate the French system should be put to death."

April 17th the allies drove back the centre of the French army, which was too loosely formed, and surrounded Landrecies. A French detachment, far too small, sent by Pichegru to relieve Landrecies, was defeated by a superior force, at the head of which was the duke of York. Landrecies was surrendered April 30th by the garrison, in spite of the inhabitants: the women even protesting with indignation.

The prince of Coburg, who commanded in the name of the emperor, did not profit by this success. The Flemish population would not permit the inundation of their territory to thwart the French, and the news which came from Flanders made Coburg see that the failure of the garrison of Landrecies would not be imitated by the French army. Pichegru commenced operations ordered by Carnot, between the Lys and the Schelde in front of Lille. He defeated the Austrian general Clerfayt, and took Menin upon the Lys.

Coburg, thus outflanked upon his right, did not advance. He attempted to stop the attacking movement of the French upon the Lys, and during the month of May, battle followed battle between the Lys and the Schelde. Clerfayt's detachment was beaten a second time, trying to repulse the French upon the borders of the Lys, near Courtrai (May 11th). Their allies united their principal forces and attempted to cut through the French lines, and to thrust the left wing towards the sea. The attack, badly organised by Coburg, completely failed. The emperor of Germany saw, from the heights of Templeuve the masses of the allied forces thrown into disorder at Tourcoing, at Roubaix — in fact, everywhere. The duke of York owed his preservation to the swiftness of his horse, and the French took sixty cannon, on May 18th.

Pichegru did not turn this to his advantage. He allowed the enemy to form again upon the Schelde near Tournay, and attacked them at the end of four days, and then without any well-conceived plans, and with very little energy; and in his turn, by his own fault was repulsed. He did not renew the attack, but prepared for the siege of Ypres, according to Carnot's instructions. This would have entailed considerable risk, in the presence of an enemy who was not disorganised, if Coburg had had more decision and taken the initiative.

During these sanguinary struggles, between the Lys and the Schelde, other sharp battles were constantly taking place upon the Sambre. The army from the Ardennes, where Saint-Just and Lebas had arrived, was forced to pass beyond this river to take Charleroi, and to penetrate into the interior of Belgium. Four times it forced the passage of the Sambre; four times it was beaten back to the other bank, by the left wing of the great allied army, under the command of the stadholder of Holland. At the commencement of June, 1794, the result of the campaign seemed very doubtful. The enemy at one time hoped to attain by treason an important success, and had secret communication with the counter-revolutionary party in Cambray. The surprise of this place compelled Pichegru to abandon his enterprise upon Flanders, and to fall into the rear.

JEAN BAPTISTE KLÉBER
(1753–1800)

Joseph Lebon, a representative, was sent to Pas-de-Calais, and to the north; he defeated the plots, and crushed the royalists by the most terrible executions. His feeble and excitable brain was strung to such a pitch that he saw traitors everywhere; he struck ceaselessly in a sort of madness, and at Cambray and at Arras committed foolish cruelties which have gained him an odious renown; nevertheless he rendered most valuable services. And this man who passes for a second Carrier started by manifesting very humane views, and moderate opinions like the Girondins. He is a dreadful and sad example of the influence extreme situations produce upon men who have not absolute control over themselves.

The military situation was changed by the development of Carnot's plan. Carnot renewed the bold tactics he had employed before Hondschoote and Wattignies, and emptied the east to reinforce the north. April 30th he had decided with the committee of public safety that the army of the Moselle, enlarged by a part of the army of the Rhine, should proceed to the Maas and the Sambre. He made the committee take General Jourdan, his companion of Wattignies, into its good favour again, and confided to his charge the army of the Moselle. Jourdan marched through Luxemburg, defeated a detachment of the Austrian army near Arlon, and joined the army of the Ardennes, near Charleroi, June 4th.

Saint-Just and Lebas gave him chief command upon the Sambre, and he found himself at the head of 80,000 men. He had with him the heroes of Mainz and of La Vendée, Kléber and Marceau. The French, between the Maas and the sea, outnumbered the enemy by about 30,000 men, although the latter had received a reinforcement of 10,000 English and émigrés. The superiority of number would have been more than lost by the French, had the Prussian army crossed the borders of the Rhine, and joined the allies upon the Sambre, as England and Holland wished, but Prussia, while receiving subsidies from the English and the Dutch, made war to suit herself and not them.

When the Prussians finally moved, they arrived very late: it took them twice as long as the French army from the Moselle to appear upon the Belgian battle-fields; not only because they had a longer distance to traverse, but because they marched with all the heavy paraphernalia of a regular army. The French went, so to speak, the whole length without transport, tents, or provisions, living upon supplies rapidly raised upon the route, and bearing with heroic gaiety privations and sufferings that the soldiers of the allies would never have endured. They had no shoes; but they had, according to the testimony of an English contemporary writer, "the best bands of music which played the finest war marches that ever fired the heart of man."

It was not only the fear of losing Mainz again that held the Prussians back. The king, Frederick William, was exceedingly uneasy concerning the Poles. That unfortunate people made at this time a desperate effort to regain its independence. A great patriot and a great soldier, Kosciuszko, placed himself at the head of a vast insurrection. He gained a victory over the Russians, and delivered Warsaw. The king of Prussia was afraid that, if he entered too actively into the war against France, the French Republic would interfere in the affairs of Poland; the committee had been fervently entreated by the Polish patriots to come to their aid. He feared under these circumstances the French would be able to induce Turkey and Sweden to declare in favour of Poland.

The emperor of Austria was not less discouraged than the king of Prussia. He feared that Belgium would escape him again. The restoration of his government took place there, after the defeat of Dumouriez, amidst the applause of the population, whilst at Liège the prince-bishop installed himself in terror of the scaffold. But the good feeling of the Belgians did not continue for long. The Austrian administration found itself in a terrible wasps' nest, between "the old Joséphiste party"—that is to say, the central and lay party, discontented with making concessions to the clergy—and the clerical party, irritated because they were not given everything, and the revolutionary and French party, which rapidly regained ground after the French had departed and the Austrians returned.

The Austrian government called for men and money to prevent the return of the French; the provincial states and the Belgian towns refused. At the approach of the French troops, it was not only in the country of Liège, constant friend to France, that peasants and citizens attacked the Austrian regiments and the émigrés; hostilities also broke out at Ghent and in other towns lately hostile to the French.

When Francis II, called back to Vienna by events in Poland, left his army under the command of Coburg, it was decided to evacuate Belgium, and following the example given by Prussia to concentrate upon possessions less distant and less difficult to hold (June 9th); and Russia was promised some new Polish provinces to obtain its aid against the insurrection.

THE CONQUEST OF FLANDERS: CHARLEROI AND FLEURUS

At heart, Francis II and Frederick William were resigned to come to terms with Robespierre, in spite of his violence of language against them when he became dictator. Robespierre and his friends upon one side, and Carnot upon the other, hoped to be able to detach Prussia from the coalition, and Carnot doubted that Austria would be able to hold Belgium. He saw in England, in Pitt, the true enemy, and occupied himself more with naval matters relating to the Netherlands than with the Rhine. Belgium appeared

to him to be worth the price of a victory, and he prepared to attack Zealand, that group of Dutch islands facing England. Whilst waiting, the invasion of Flanders developed itself. Pichegru took Ypres (June 17th), Bruges (June 29th), and Ostend the next day, with a large amount of military and naval supplies. The fickle Flemish population, but a short time before enraged with France, now received her soldiers with open arms.

Jourdan was also in action. His first movements were unfortunate. A fifth passage over the Sambre near Charleroi had the same result as the preceding four. The French were again thrown back upon the other bank (June 16th). Jourdan promised to make up for this check by a victory; he sent for the artillery from Maubeuge, again crossed the Sambre, and invested and bombarded Charleroi. Coburg lost several days in hesitating as to whether he should march to the relief of the Flemish towns, or to the relief of Charleroi. The French did not lose an hour. June 25th the batteries were reduced to silence, and a breach was made. The Austrian commander demanded a parley; Saint-Just refused. "It is necessary," said he, "to surrender at discretion, and at once."

Charleroi surrendered. The garrison was treated humanely and honourably. The same evening Coburg appeared in sight with 80,000 men. He endeavoured to recover by a great battle all he had lost. Jourdan awaited him before Charleroi with his army drawn out in a great half-circle, the two extremities extending to the Sambre, above and below the conquered town. The forces were nearly equal. The French, contrary to their plan at Jemmapes and Wattignies, took a defensive line of battle. Coburg did not understand how to do what Carnot had done against him at Wattignies; instead of concentrating his principal forces against one of the extremities of the too-extended line, he attacked all points at once. A partial success terminated in nothing; after a long day of determined attacks against the French positions, which occupied a vast space of hills, woods, and valleys, several posts being taken and retaken, and great losses sustained by the assailants, Coburg was discouraged and beat a retreat. This celebrated day, June 28th, 1794, is known in history as the battle of Fleurus, from a village which had already given its name to a victory gained by the French under Louis XIV. But much blood had been shed for nothing since the abandonment of Belgium had been decided upon beforehand by the emperor Francis.

The battle of Fleurus did not produce the overwhelming consequences it would have done if Hoche had been with the army; it decided, however, the result of the campaign. After a series of combats in which the different French divisions drove the enemy before them from post to post, the army of Pichegru and the army of Jourdan effected a junction in Brussels, July 10th. Before the end of the month, Belgium and the country of Liège were evacuated by the enemy; the French having succeeded in separating the Austrian army from the English and the Dutch, the Austrians withdrew to the right bank of the Maas, and the English and Dutch forces fell back upon the Dutch Brabant in order to protect Holland. A part of the French army fell back upon the four places still occupied in French territory by the enemies' garrisons — Landrecies, Le Quesnoy, Valenciennes, and Condé. The enemy had accumulated great means of defence in these fortresses, and were in a position to sustain long sieges. The committee of public safety tried to terrify these foreign garrisons. On July 4th the convention passed the following decree:

"All the troops of the coalition of tyrants, shut up in French territory invaded by the enemy on the northern frontier, who do not surrender at discretion within twenty-four hours after the warrant is made known, will not be permitted to capitulate, but will be put to the sword."

These terrible threats had their effect. The first place attacked, Landrecies, surrendered immediately, July 15th. Then others were attacked, whilst Jourdan faced the Austrians upon the Maas, and Pichegru commenced the invasion of Holland, that is to say, in the thoughts of the committee, by the attack of the English outposts.

NAVAL DISASTERS

While the English army shared the reverses of the Austrians in Belgium, a great conflict took place between their fleet and the French fleet on the sea. The French privateers had done a great deal of harm to English commerce by disabling and capturing their ships. Pitt hoped to avenge himself by an immense capture. France, threatened by starvation, awaited with anxiety a convoy of two hundred vessels filled with corn and colonial supplies from the United States of America.[1] This meant more at the moment than the support of an army. An English fleet of twenty ships-of-the-line, commanded by Admiral Howe, got under way to intercept the convoy. The committee of public safety enjoined the admiral commanding the French fleet at Brest, Villaret-Joyeuse, to save the convoy at all price. Villaret sailed with twenty-four ships. The French had but few experienced officers, and had been obliged to enlist men who had never been to sea before; but the deputy Jean Bon Saint-André, who embarked with the admiral, inspired them with such courage that they greeted the sight of the enemy's fleet with enthusiastic acclamations, and loudly cried for battle.

Enthusiasm, unfortunately, could take the place of science even less in naval than in military warfare. Yet, thanks to the energy and intelligence of their sailors, the French fleet withstood the repeated attacks of the English (May 29th).

After the first engagement, Villaret and Jean Bon Saint-André deemed it necessary to manœuvre and draw the enemy as far as possible from the route that the convoy from America would take. They drew off. Admiral Howe followed them. The struggle recommenced June 1st. Both sides had received reinforcements, which more than replaced the ships already disabled. The French had twenty-six ships-of-the-line; the English numbered just thirty-four.

A false manœuvre by one of the French ships enabled Admiral Howe to break the line and to surround the flag-ship, the *Montagne*, a magnificent vessel of 130 guns; with Villaret and Jean Bon Saint-André on board. The *Montagne* disengaged herself by heroic efforts. After two hours under a terrible fire, the greater portion of the French and English ships were dismasted or disabled. The victory would rest with the admiral who could seize the greater number of vessels.

The advance-guard of the French having given way, Villaret could not capture the enemies' ships. He saved four of his own by having them towed by frigates and sloops of war; but six others, which were nothing better (at least so said Jean Bon Saint-André) than "buried carcasses," remained in the power of the enemy.

A seventh ship, the *Vengeur*, sank. Her crew united round the stump of the great mast, and nailed there the tricolour flag, so that it should not fall

[1 Gouverneur Morris, ambassador to France from the United States, had arranged this method of repaying in wheat the money France had lent during the Revolution.]

into the power of the English, and sank into the abyss, crying "Long live the republic!"[1]

The English fleet had suffered too severely to renew the attack. It was the most furious naval battle that had been witnessed since the battle of La Hogue, under Louis XIV. During this great struggle, the convoy had passed, and entered safely into one of the ports of Brittany. The mutilated portion of the French fleet that the English had not followed, a few days after the battle gave chase to a fresh squadron of English vessels that menaced the coast of Brittany.

FRENCH MILITARY SUCCESSES IN EVERY DIRECTION

The English successfully renewed their aggressions against Martinique and Guadeloupe, and took those little islands. A small squadron left Brest and drove them from Guadeloupe. Together with the Spaniards, they invaded the French port of Santo Domingo, and sent their bands of émigrés, who suborned both the whites and the blacks. But the blacks, led by a man of great courage and of remarkable capacity, the negro Toussaint L'Ouverture, turned against the English and the Spaniards, and assisted what remained of the French troops to drive back the enemy to certain points of the west side of the island. Hopes were raised that this great colony would not be altogether lost to France (June, 1794).

The English did not attempt to assist the insurrection that had arisen in La Vendée. A landing there would have been impossible — the insurgent forces had no maritime position. To return again to the war of the Vendeans and Chouans: the English had the best fortune in Corsica, where their fleet, escaped from Toulon, had gone to give assistance to the insurgent population. Paoli's party feared to be unable to maintain the independence of the island, and had recognised the king of England as sovereign. The allies of the English during this time met with reverse after reverse in the Alps and the Pyrenees. The Piedmontese did not receive any assistance from other Italian states, which belonged to the coalition and were only reinforced by a few thousand Austrians. The French army in the Alps seized the passes of Little St. Bernard and of Mont Cenis, which gave them the entry into Piedmont.

In Italy the army had equal success. Young Robespierre, *représentative en mission*, had given the command of the artillery to Bonaparte, who became general. Dumerbion, who commanded the army in the place of Hoche, now a prisoner in Paris, allowed himself to be guided by Bonaparte; the French forces took Oneglia and drove the Piedmontese from the strong positions of Saorge and the Col di Tenda (April, 1794). They were now able to descend whenever they wished into the plains of Piedmont.

In the eastern Pyrenees the French success was even more brilliant. The brave and skilful general Dugommier, after retaking Toulon, had been sent to Perpignan. He reorganised the army in the eastern Pyrenees, took the offensive, drove the Spaniards into their camp at Boulou, carried off from them 140 cannon and all their baggage, and put them to flight in great disorder (May 1st).

[1] This famous incident is accepted by practically every French historian, but it is ridiculed by English naval officers present in the action and put down as an invention of Barrère's! According to the English account, the sailors of the *Vengeur* very readily consented to be rescued by the victors and were taken off just before the riddled hulk sank. The French claim to have had in the engagement only 26 ships to the English 34; while the English claim to have had only 25.]

The positions occupied by the Spaniards in Roussillon were retaken; the French encroached upon the Spanish frontier, and occupied Cerdagne.

Before the end of July, the general aspect of the war could be summed up thus: The reverses of the commencement of '93 were entirely retrieved in the north. Belgium had again fallen under the power of the French Republic; the French frontier in the Pyrenees was freed from Spanish invasion; Holland and Italy were open to French armies. The plan of campaign drawn up by Carnot had been successful at every point.[i] Pichegru continued his march towards the mouth of the Schelde and the Maas, driving back to the sea the duke of York and the English, while Jourdan occupied the Maas from Liège to Maestricht, opposed to Clerfayt and the Austrians. It was important for him to cross the river, so as to gain the banks of the Rhine; and, in order to succeed, he had to force the lines of the Ourthe and the Roër, tributaries of the Maas.

Jourdan gave battle twice successively on these two rivers; he gained two victories, pursued Clerfayt as far as the Rhine, took Cologne, and besieged Maestricht. The army of the north also won the bank of this river: Bois-le-Duc and Wenloo fell before it. The duke of York, unfortunate in his operations, abandoned the district lying between the Maas and the Waal, one of the branches of the Rhine, and fell back towards Nimeguen, on the Waal, where Pichegru soon appeared to brave him; on November 8th this important place fell into the power of the French.[h]

PICHEGRU CONQUERS HOLLAND (1794–1795 A.D.)

The French armies, consolidated on the left bank of the Rhine, and with no formidable impediment to obstruct their passage to the right shore, menaced Holland and Germany. Was it prudent to move them onwards, or ought they to be withdrawn into cantonments? Such was the question to be solved.

Notwithstanding their triumphs and long sojourn in fertile and teeming Belgium, they were in the utmost destitution. The country they occupied, overrun for three years by innumerable legions, was entirely exhausted. With the evils of war were combined those of the French administration, which had introduced in its wake assignats, requisitions, and the maximum. Provisional municipalities, eight intermediate authorities, and a central administration established at Brussels, governed the country pending its definitive fate. The traders and farmers concealed all they possessed, and both officer and soldier were exposed to the greatest privations.

Levied *en masse* the preceding year, accoutred on the spur of the moment, and hastily transported to Hondschoote, Wattignies, Landau, the army had since received nothing from the government but powder and projectiles. Long ago it had ceased to encamp under tents; it bivouacked under the foliage of trees, despite the commencement of a winter already inclement. Many soldiers, in defect of shoes, enveloped their feet in wisps of straw, and covered their bodies with mats in place of mantles. The officers, paid in assignats, often found their appointments depreciated to eight or ten actual francs per month; those who received supplies from their friends were seldom allowed to appropriate them, for everything was absorbed by the requisitions of the French administration. They were reduced to the condition of the private soldier, marching on foot, carrying knapsacks on their backs, feeding on the coarse ration-bread, and trusting for existence to the precarious chances of war. The war administration seemed exhausted

by the extraordinary efforts it had made to levy and equip twelve hundred thousand men. Nor was the new organisation of the government, weak and disjointed, calculated to impart to it the requisite vigour and activity.

The time was now at length arrived for entering into cantonments, since the French were in possession of all the important points on the Rhine. Doubtless, to conquer Holland, and thus secure the navigation of the three great rivers, the Schelde, the Maas, and the Rhine, deprive England of its most powerful maritime alliance, menace Germany on its flanks, interrupt the communications of the continental enemies of France with the insular, or at least oblige them to make the long circuit of Hamburg; in short, open up the richest country in the world, and the most desirable for France in its present commercial prostration — was an object, with such inordinate advantages, apt to tempt the ambition of the government and armies of France.

The committee of public welfare, stimulated by the Dutch refugees, seriously discussed the expediency of pushing for a point beyond the Waal. Pichegru, in a plight deplorable as that of his soldiers, who were covered with itch and vermin, had repaired to Brussels for relief from a cutaneous disorder. Moreau and Regnier had succeeded him in the command: both counselled repose and winter quarters. In this state of repose the army confidently expected to pass the season; and assuredly it had achieved enough to be proud of its glory and services. But a hazard, partaking of the miraculous, opened for it a new career, to close in yet more brilliant destinies. The cold, already intense, soon increased to such a point as to foster hopes that the great rivers might be probably frozen. Pichegru quitted Brussels, without waiting for his effectual cure, eager to be on the spot to take advantage of the season if it offered the opportunity of fresh conquests. In effect, the winter speedily became more severe, and gave tokens of proving the most rigorous that had occurred during the century. On the 23rd of December, the Maas was firmly frozen, so as to bear the weight of cannon. General Walmoden, to whom the duke of York had devolved the command upon his own departure for England, and whom he had thereby condemned to a series of humiliating disasters, found himself in a precarious position. The Maas being frozen over, his front was exposed; and the Waal being filled with ice, threatening to carry away the bridges, his retreat was endangered. He speedily learned that the bridge of Arnheim had been actually swept away, and he thereupon hastened to transfer his baggage and heavy cavalry to the rear, and in person directed a retreat on Deventer, on the banks of the Yssel.

The French soldiers, braving the hardest winter of the century almost in a state of nudity, marching in shoes whereof the upper leather was all that remained, left their quarters with alacrity, and cheerfully renounced the repose they had scarcely begun to enjoy. On the 28th of December, in a cold of seventeen degrees, they traversed the ice with their artillery, surprised the Dutch, nearly benumbed by the cold, and completely routed them. Whilst they took possession of the isle of Bommel, the division besieging Breda attacked and stormed the lines. The Dutch, assailed on all points, retrograded in disorder, one part towards the headquarters of the prince of Orange, at Gorkum, the residue to Thiel. Such was the confusion of their retreat that they even omitted to take measures for defending the passage of the Waal, which was not entirely frozen over.

Whilst the republicans awaited the operation of the frost with the utmost impatience, the fortress of Grave, heroically defended by the commandant Debons, surrendered, almost in a heap of ruins. It was the principal of the

strongholds possessed by the Dutch beyond the Maas, and the only one which had not yielded to the ascendency of the French arms. The French entered it on the 29th of December. At length, on the 8th of January, 1795, the Waal was solidly frozen. On beholding this general movement, Walmoden and his army retrograded. The prince of Orange deserted his army, presented himself before the states assembled at the Hague, announced to them he had attempted all in his power for the defence of the country, and declared that nothing more could be done. He urged the representatives to offer no further resistance to the conqueror, in order to avert still greater calamities, and with this exhortation set sail for England.

From that moment, the advance of the invading army became the rush of a torrent. The states of Holland resolved that all resistance to the French should cease, and commissioners be despatched to open to them the fortresses they might deem requisite for their security. In every town, the secret committees previously formed manifested their organisation, annulled the established authorities, and spontaneously appointed others in their stead. The French were received with open arms, and as liberators; the food and raiment they so woefully lacked were brought to them with alacrity. At length, on the 20th of January, Pichegru made his entry into Amsterdam. The inhabitants flocked to greet his advent, bearing in triumph the persecuted patriots, and rending the air with cries of "The French Republic forever! Long live Pichegru! Liberty forever!" They could not sufficiently admire those intrepid men, who, half-naked, had defied the rigour of so unparalleled a winter, and achieved such brilliant actions. The French soldiers gave, on this occasion, an admirable example of order and discipline. Hungry and scantily clad, exposed to a pitiless storm of snow and hail, in the heart of one of the richest capitals of Europe, they waited patiently for several hours, around their arms, piled in pyramids, until the magistrates had provided for their nourishment and distribution. Whilst the republicans had marched into the city on one side, the Orangists and French émigrés had disappeared by the opposite extremity. The sea was covered with vessels bearing from the shore fugitives and property of every description.

On the same day, Bonnaud's division, which had on the eve captured Gertruydenberg, traversed the frozen Biesbosch, and entered the town of Dordrecht, where it found 600 pieces of ordnance, 10,000 muskets, and magazines of provisions and ammunition for an army of 30,000 men. This division subsequently passed through Rotterdam on its way to occupy the Hague, where the states were in session. Thus, the right towards the Yssel, the centre towards Amsterdam, and the left towards the Hague, were successively advancing to the conquest of all the Netherland provinces. Already extraordinary as an operation of war, it was invested with the character of marvellous by a final stroke. A portion of the Dutch fleet lay at anchor near the Texel. Pichegru, unwilling to allow it time to break through the ice and make sail for England, detached some divisions of cavalry and several batteries of light artillery towards North Holland. The Zuyder Zee was frozen, and the French squadrons scoured at a gallop its icy plain, when the singular spectacle was exhibited of hussars and horse-artillerymen summoning ships of war, embedded in the frozen mass, like a fortified town. The Dutch vessels promptly struck their flags to these novel assailants.

Whilst affairs were thus progressing on the left, the right, crossing the Yssel, drove the English before it and chased them beyond the Ems. The provinces of Friesland, Drenthe, and Groningen, were thus subdued, and the seven United Provinces lay at the mercy of the victorious republic.

This conquest, due to the season, the indefatigable courage of the French soldiers, and their capacity to withstand accumulated sufferings, much more than to the ability of the generals, excited in Europe an astonishment mingled with dread, and in France a boundless exultation. Carnot, having directed the operations of the armies during the campaign in the Low Countries, was the principal and veritable author of the successes. Pichegru, and especially Jourdan, had admirably seconded his views throughout that series of sanguinary conflicts. But after the army had proceeded from Belgium into Holland, all was owing to the soldiers and the frost. Nevertheless, Pichegru, generalissimo of the forces, monopolised the glory of this miraculous conquest, and his name, borne on the wings of fame, circulated through all Europe as that of the greatest French captain.

It was not sufficient, however, to have conquered Holland; the equally difficult task remained to exhibit prudence and policy in its treatment. The first great point was to protect the country from excesses, in order not to indispose the population. Next in importance was the political direction to be impressed on Holland; and here two contrary opinions were to be considered. One party maintained that the conquest should be rendered advantageous to the cause of liberty, by revolutionising Holland; another held that too marked a spirit of proselytism should not be manifested, in order to avoid giving fresh umbrage to Europe, now ready to seal a reconciliation with France.

SUCCESSES IN SPAIN

The triumph of France, so complete and astonishing in Holland, was not less signal in Spain. There, the climate, from its mildness, had not obstructed the operations of the army. Dugommier, quitting the upper Pyrenees, had moved in presence of the hostile lines, and attacked on three points the long chain of positions occupied by General de la Union. The gallant leader of the French, Dugommier, was killed in the central onslaught by a cannon-ball. The left wing failed to make any impression: but the right, thanks to the bravery and energy of Augereau, obtained a complete victory. The command-in-chief was conferred on Pérignon, who resumed the attack on the 20th of November, and gained a decisive advantage. The enemy fled in disorder, and abandoned to the French the entrenched camp of Figueras. Consternation seized on the Spaniards; the commandant of Figueras threw open the gates of that town on the 29th of November, and the French entered into possession of one of the finest fortifications in Europe. Such was their position in Catalonia. Towards the western Pyrenees, they had taken Fuenterrabia, San Sebastian, and Tolosa, and occupied the whole province of Guipuzcoa. Moncey, who succeeded General Müller, had cleared the mountains and advanced even to the gates of Pamplona. However, deeming his situation too hazardous, he had retraced his steps, and, resting on more secure positions, awaited the return of spring to penetrate into the Castilles.

The winter, therefore, had not been allowed to retard the progress of this immortal campaign, and it only now finally closed amidst the stormy and inclement weather of Pluviôse. If the auspicious campaign of 1793 had saved France from the horrors of invasion by the deblockades of Dunkirk, Maubeuge, and Landau, that of 1794 crowned her with the laurel of a conqueror, by subjugating to her sway Belgium, Holland, the districts comprised between the Maas and the Rhine, the Palatinate, the great barrier of the Alps, the line of the Pyrenees, and several places in Catalonia and Biscay. Hereafter, doubtless, we shall witness still greater marvels; but these two

campaigns will hold their place in history as the most decidedly national, legitimate, and honourable ever undertaken by France.

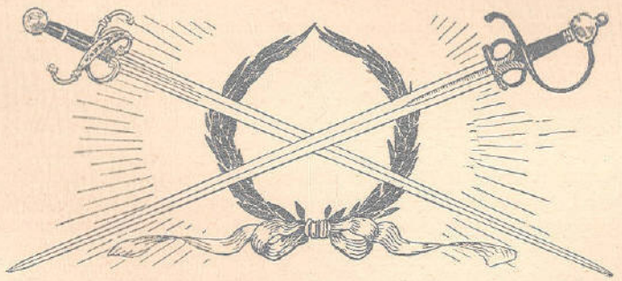
The coalition could not bear up against such rude and numerous shocks. The English cabinet alone, which, by the aid of the incompetent duke of York, had merely lost the territories of its allies, and, under pretext of recovering those of the stadholder, had acquired forty or fifty ships of war, and projected the appropriation, under the like pretence, of the Dutch colonies, could have no urgent reasons for terminating the war; on the contrary, it trembled at the prospect of its conclusion by the rupture of the coalition. But Prussia, which beheld the French on the banks of the Rhine and the Ems, and saw the torrent ready to sweep into her own confines, no longer hesitated. She forthwith despatched an envoy to Pichegru's headquarters, empowered to conclude a truce and undertake to open immediate negotiations for peace. The place selected for the conference was Bâle, where the French Republic maintained an agent.[j]

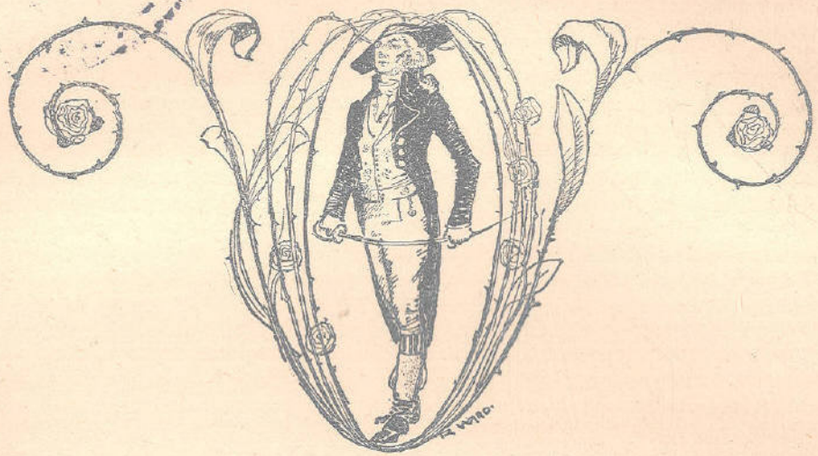
TREATY OF PEACE WITH PRUSSIA

On the 2nd of January, 1795, a Prussian envoy came to the committee of public safety to declare that his king would not oppose the abolition of the stadholdership in Holland nor the occupation of the left bank of the Rhine by France, save that the definite cession of the Rhenish provinces should be adjourned until the general peace. The motive urged for this adjournment was the fear that Austria, if she got the upper hand in the war, should take the country on the left side as being French and not by right of conquest. On the 13th of January the conference opened at Bâle between the plenipotentiary of Prussia and the French minister in Switzerland, Barthélemy, who, by his skilful negotiation, had hindered Switzerland from entering the coalition. Peace was signed between France and Prussia the 16th Germinal (April 5th, 1795).

The Peace of Bâle was hailed with enthusiastic applause by the convention and all France. France had attained the highest power she had ever known. She had added to herself, by voluntary union, by conquest, or by alliance, immense territories and 13,000,000 souls. Her allies, the Dutch, were as much attached to her fortunes as the new citizens of Savoy, Belgium, or the Rhine.

In seventeen months she had been successful in 27 battles and 120 fights and had taken 116 strongholds.[i]





CHAPTER XIII

THE REACTION

[1794–1795 A.D.]

> Despicable as Robespierre himself might be, the death of Robespierre was a signal at which great multitudes of men, struck dumb with terror heretofore, rose out of their hiding-places; and, as it were, saw one another, how multitudinous they were; and began speaking and complaining. They are countable by the thousand and the million; who have suffered cruel wrong. Ever louder rises the plaint of such a multitude; into a universal sound, into a universal continuous peal, of what they call Public Opinion. Camille [Desmoulins] had demanded a "Committee of Mercy," and could not get it; but now the whole Nation resolves itself into a Committee of Mercy; the Nation has tried Sansculottism and is weary of it. — CARLYLE.

ROBESPIERRE had made his stand against the people, and vanquished them. At that moment the reaction took place, the recoil upward. Like a diver, who, the moment he touches the bottom, springs rapidly back towards the surface, the Revolution commenced to reascend, traversing the same currents which it had passed in its descent, rising from Jacobinism to Girondism and from Girondism to royalism — at last to absolute power. The descent and ascent filled nearly about the same period, the one from 1789 to 1794; the other from 1794 to the ascendency of Bonaparte in 1799. The people were, indeed, little contented with a course of things that was gradually consigning them to their original obscurity and want of influence. They rose, they fought, they struggled; but, once defeated, they were always defeated. At last the middle classes, the good bourgeois, began to perceive that they, too, were about to be set aside, and that the government was tending fast to absolutism. They rose in arms, and fought their quarrel on the day of the sections.

It is this route that we have still to trace and to describe; we enter on the domestic struggle of the period immediately subsequent to Robespierre's fall, having already taken a view of the military fortunes of the country. The insurrection of La Vendée was crushed, though not extinguished, in the

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winter of 1793–1794. Had England supported it with the [illegible] force and spirit with which she afterwards aided the peninsula, she would [illegible] saved millions, and spared Europe the fame and empire of Bonaparte. An English army and a Bourbon prince would have rallied the whole of the west of France, and its probable successes would have come at the opportune time when the republican feeling was on the ebb; when the apathy of suffering had seized on many, and when a strong party was raising its head in favour of constitutional monarchy. But Pitt, whom the Jacobins accused of being the spring and mine of every commotion, was, on the contrary, ignorant of the very names of the leaders of La Vendée.

THE THERMIDORIAN REACTION

Whilst Pichegru and Jourdan, aided by Bernadotte, were chasing the Austrians, the English, and the Dutch before them, the convention continued its debates and quarrels, no longer sanguinary indeed, but still violent in the extreme. Robespierre had been overthrown by a coalition formed betwixt the Dantonists and his jealous brethren of the committees. But the enmity of these to Robespierre was merely personal. They were no less terrorists, greater terrorists, in our opinion, than even he. Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barrère, had sought to change the man rather than the system. They were as disinclined as ever to "moderantism," which they suspected would prove dangerous to the republic, and still more dangerous to themselves. The members on the other hand, called "moderate" in the language of the day, though sufficiently sanguinary, the menaced friends of Danton, such as Tallien, Fréron, Legendre, assumed the new name of "Thermidorians," as if to cut off all connection with the past. But still they avoided to undertake any sudden reaction, and the prisons were but gradually opened, the revolutionary tribunal abolished but by degrees. The executive government was modified, not changed. Of the twelve members of the committee of public safety, three were to be renewed each month, by which provision Tallien immediately entered, Collot and Billaud ceased to belong to it.

Just vengeance, too, though slow, did not altogether sleep. The judges of the tribunal of blood, and the public accusers, were sent to the scaffold. Steps were taken to bring the proconsuls, Carrier and Lebon, to the same fate. David and his brother ruffians of the committee of general safety were put in arrest. These measures, however wise and short of just retribution, were sufficient to alarm the terrorists, and those implicated in the extreme and violent acts of the Revolution. Nor were the moderate and reactionary party out of doors satisfied. So many had the deaths of fathers, mothers, relatives of all kinds, to avenge, that truce was impossible between them and their enemies. The sectionary meetings were the chief scene of these plaints and recriminations. The citizens, recovered from their terror, appeared there to exclaim against those who had terrified them; whilst the rabble and its representatives clamoured that the aristocrats were all let loose to plot once more the downfall of the republic. The press, too, recovered its freedom; and made use of its power in favour of moderation. Such journals as those of Marat and of Hébert were no longer tolerated. Humanity of taste, as well as of feeling, resumed its natural ascendency.

There was another singular effect observable at this period: men in the maturity and advance of life had universally disgraced themselves: they had either joined the violent, and from passion or calculation rushed into

crime; or else they had shrunk in pusillanimity away, and remained suffering and hidden during the dreadful crisis. The military profession formed a bright exception, which is one grand reason for the ascendency, not unmerited, which it speedily acquired. But all civilians were under the ban. The consequence was that, in the capital especially, youth pushed age and manhood aside. The young alone undertook to raise the banner of moderation, to stoop no longer, as their sires had done, beneath the menaces of the terrorists, and to support by force, if requisite, the triumph of national liberty over the arbitrary and despotic principles of the thorough revolutionists. This leagued band of young men gratified at once the vanity of their age and their contempt for sansculottism, by elegance of dress and of manners. They were called, in derision, by their enemies, *la jeunesse dorée* ("the begilded youths").

MADAME DE STAËL
(1766-1817)

The same epithet was applied to the salons that now dared to open and to receive society. These no longer belonged to the ancient noblesse, whom the French had proscribed, far more on account of their social arrogance than of their political privileges. Wealth now had the undisputed lead, birth and talent having fallen under the axe of the Terror; financiers, jobbers, contractors, Jacobins, enriched by rapine, all the cunning ones who had speculated with success in the Revolution — these men now claimed the chief consideration; their wives or mistresses became the queens of the gay circles.

Madame Tallien bore away the palm amongst them. She was the widow of an émigré. Tallien, secretary of the commune during the massacres of September, having gone as a proconsul to Bordeaux, which he deluged with blood, became enamoured of her. She had the merit of softening the vindictiveness of the tyrant, and recalling him to humanity. Robespierre had imprisoned her; and fears for her life had principally given Tallien the courage to declare against the Terror and its chief. Tallien then married his mistress, who was known as *Notre Dame de Thermidor*. With her, Madame Récamier, wife of a rich banker, disputed the palm of beauty. That of wit, high intellect, and nobleness of character fell to Madame de Staël. Nor are these details unimportant to history. The resurrection of polite society, so long extinct, — the natural pre-eminence of the well-bred in such circles, thus giving flagrant contradiction to the revolutionary principle, the empire recovered by sarcasm and ridicule now turned against popular excesses, — contributed to change altogether the general tone of feeling. The persiflage of conversation effected now in France what the written persiflage of Hudibras worked in England upon the Revolution — namely, shamed and killed political fanaticism. Another similarity in the fate of the two countries, at these similar epochs, was the dissolution of morals consequent upon the decay of enthusiasm.

About a month was allowed to elapse after the fall of Robespierre, ere any rupture was menaced betwixt the parties in the convention. After that interval, Lecointre, deputy for Versailles, could no longer restrain his spleen; and accused Billaud-Varennes, Collot, and Barrère, as accomplices of the fallen tyrant. The body of the Thermidorians had, however, not as yet made up their minds for new strife. They disapproved of Lecointre's zeal; and his accusation in consequence fell to the ground. This circumstance, therefore, restored the courage of the fierce Mountainists. They bullied, clamoured, and the Jacobin club once more resounded with furious declamation. An attempt was made to assassinate Tallien; and the Thermidorians found themselves obliged to abandon their moderation. Their first attempt was against the clubs; and divers proposals were made to forbid members of the convention from belonging to them, for purifying them of the anarchists, as had been done universally with respect to the municipal councils.

But the majority of the convention, of which, as yet, timidity was the chief characteristic, feared as much to appear counter-revolutionists as terrorists, and could not be moved to decision without an impulse from without. This was given them by the trial of a number of citizens of Nantes, who had been sent to the revolutionary tribunal at Paris. In their defence they revealed all the crimes of Carrier, who had decimated their city, and invented the famous *noyades*, or drownings of prisoners. These details excited the public indignation. The accusation of Carrier was loudly called for. He defended himself with energy, declaring, with some truth, that the entire convention participated in his crimes, and that "the whole assembly was culpable, even to the very bell of the president." Nevertheless, after long debates and delay, Carrier was ordered to stand his trial. This affair excited to the utmost the interest and animosity of both parties. The terrorists saw in Carrier's downfall their own ruin. The moderates demanded loudly, in his case, the verdict to which the convention had been unwilling to reduce the colleagues and betrayers of Robespierre. Billaud-Varennes, no longer listened to in the convention, consoled himself in the Jacobins, and on one occasion menaced that "the lion might awaken." The lion could be no other than the Terror; and this threat had the effect of awakening the very opposite feeling.

THE JACOBIN CLUB CLOSED

A body of the *jeunesse dorée*, the youth of the capital, surrounded the Jacobin club, broke the windows, insulted and chastised divers of the female furies of the galleries, that sought to escape. The Jacobins defended their hall, and even sallied out on their besiegers. The patrol at length interfered, dispersed the youth who besieged, but at the same time cleared the hall of the Jacobins. From this little engagement it appeared that the moderate party was strongest even in the streets. This gave courage to the timid majority of the assembly. It rallied to the side of the Thermidorians; and the Jacobin club was ordered to be finally closed. This was followed up by the recall of the exiled and proscribed deputies, who returned in considerable numbers; and, reinforcing the moderate side, flung at once the whole weight of power into the hands of the Thermidorians.

But few of the leading Girondists still survived to take advantage of the decree of recall. In addition to the twenty-one tried and executed together, Salles, Guadet, and Barbaroux had been taken, and underwent the same fate at Bordeaux as their brethren at Paris; Pétion and Buzot were found dead

in the forest where they had been concealed, the remains of the former partly devoured by wolves. Condorcet, the literary and philosophic head of the party, after lurking for many months in the vicinity of Paris, was discovered by chance, and swallowed poison. Most of them perished but a short month previous to the 9th Thermidor, which would have restored them to the convention and to their lost influence. Louvet, Lanjuinais, and Isnard were the principal ones of those who returned.

In many, perhaps most, shocks and maladies incident to the human frame, the increase of pain is counteracted by the numbness of feeling, and agony is lost in insensibility. It is in the moment of recovery, of returning strength, at the moment of revival from faint, that suffering is most poignant, and the weight of ill most felt. Somewhat similar to this was the state of France recovering from the Terror. That dread reign had stricken all with stupor, but it banished most disorders. The country was defended by "requisitions"; money was found by the simple printing of assignats; whilst all commodities, limited to a maximum or fixed price, were to a certain degree attainable.

THE INSURRECTION OF THE HUNGRY

Food was not plentiful, indeed; but its want did not then amount to famine. From the moment, however, that Terror ceased, the farmer, the shopkeeper, felt no longer compelled by imminent death to bring forth their commodities in order to sell them at a low price: the assignats sank almost to extinction of value; it was no longer in the power or wish of the government to keep the mob in pay, as Robespierre had continued partly to do. And hence the working classes fell back into that state of idleness and famine which they had experienced at the commencement of the Revolution. Riot appeared in the streets, the young men of the better classes often combating the rabble of the faubourgs.

The recent execution of Carrier, and the approaching trial of Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barrère, rendered it incumbent on the old Mountainists to use the utmost efforts to rouse the people. They succeeded in mustering the sections of the faubourg St. Antoine. And from these accordingly, in the spring of 1795, petitions began to flow in to the convention, the old prelude to disorder. The cry and pretext were also the same as in the old insurrection. Bread was their demand — bread, and the democratic constitution of 1793. The convention repelled these covert menaces with dignity; the president Thibaudeau had the courage to tell several hundreds of turbulent petitioners to return to their labours.

Exertions at the same time were made to meet the wishes of the people. Boissy d'Anglas at the head of the commission for provisioning the capital — there was no longer a mayor, Paris being divided into twelve municipalities — took measures for warding off famine. As to the democratic constitution of 1793, it was found impracticable; and it was now openly avowed that the people were incapable of thus governing themselves. Each epoch had given birth to its constitution. A committee was now appointed to prepare another. On the 21st of March a new petition was prepared, and presented by all the force that the Jacobins could muster. The moderates were, however, prepared on this occasion, and the young Parisians flocked to the Tuileries and Carrousel, armed with sticks, and prepared for the combat. Repulsed from the assembly, the furious petitioners insulted the youth in the garden, whom they called aristocrats and traitors. From reproaches they proceeded to blows; but fortunately there were no sharp weapons to

inflict them. The faubourgs had been long since disarmed of their pikes, and now their rabble were beaten in a bloodless engagement, and smartly castigated by the sticks of their young enemies, who put them to flight.

This affair was but a skirmish, in which the rabble, not having put forth their strength, were beaten. The redoubtable faubourgs knew full well that they were more than a match for the mere youth who formed the guard of moderantism; but there was need of organisation, of a systematic combination, of an opportunity and pretext. While the anarchists were thus plotting, the convention proceeded to judge Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barrère. They defended themselves by implicating the assembly; their colleagues, Carnot and Prieur, not included in the accusation, because known to have occupied themselves exclusively with administration, leaving the police and the supply of the guillotine to their brethren, came forward and demanded to be arraigned at the same time. This caused delay; for Carnot, looked upon as the organiser of military success, was too popular to be visited with condemnation. The trial, therefore, dragged on from day to day, interrupted by tumult and noisy petitions. At length the plotters of the faubourgs thought proper to act.

They rose in insurrection on the 12th Germinal (the 1st of April), placed the women and children in the front of their column, and marched to the convention. The seditious movement being unexpected, there was at first no force to repel it, and the mob entered the Tuileries without opposition, forced the doors of the assembly, and rushed in amongst the members, shouting, "Bread, the liberation of the accused patriots, and the constitution of 1793!" The insurgents, however, conducted themselves with too little premeditation and order; they refused to clear the hall. Thus the opportunity was lost; they knew not how to make use of their conquest, retired, and dispersed.

The convention no sooner found itself restored to liberty in the evening of the tumultuous day, than it proceeded to measures of energy. Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barrère, were condemned to transportation; and seven of those Mountainists who had so lately applauded the insurgents were arrested, and ordered to be sent to the castle of Ham in Picardy. The difficulty was to execute these decrees, and to despatch the condemned upon their journey, preventing rescue by the mob.

Pichegru, then returned to Paris from the conquest of Holland, was intrusted with this task, and appointed to the command of the capital. It required all his energy to execute the commission. His name was most useful, young men who would otherwise have shrunk, gladly rallying to serve under him. The carriages bearing the prisoners were stopped, as had been expected, and the gendarmerie was beaten. Pichegru, however, held firm; and after a smart fire of musketry and cannon on either side, the troops of the convention were victorious, and the prisoners were taken to their place of destination. At three in the morning Pichegru appeared at the bar of the assembly, and declared his mission executed.

This defeat exasperated rather than crushed the popular party. Their endeavour to liberate their friends had, on the contrary, precipitated their condemnation, and included others in the sentence. They had failed too, it appeared, not from want of force, but of system; and perhaps from having shown too much forbearance. They resolved to remedy these two defeats in the next insurrection. It broke out in about seven weeks subsequent to the preceding one, and is known as that of the 1st Prairial, coinciding with the 20th of May, 1795.

THE INSURRECTION OF THE 1ST PRAIRIAL

On the evening of the 19th of May the disturbance, already apparent, showed itself openly. The clubs echoed with cries for revolt. Groups formed in the streets; women in crowds joined these groups, where were heard seditious words, bitter complaints, or atrocious threats. They loudly declared for an insurrection on the morrow. It was declared that the convention would force the people to die of hunger, that it had only overthrown Robespierre to establish a new tyranny. A handbill was distributed, containing the plan of insurrection and the resolutions to be passed. The women were to enter first, for the assembly would not fire on them; then the men should come to accomplish the desire of the people.

A French General, end of the Eighteenth Century

On the 1st Prairial from five o'clock in the morning the tocsin was sounded in the suburbs of St. Antoine and St. Marceau. It was only three hours after that the committee of public safety beat an alarm in those sections faithful to the preservation of public order. At eleven o'clock the convention began its sitting. The members of the committees were not all present. Isabeau, in the name of the committee of public safety, read a copy of the handbill being scattered broadcast through the town.

The ringleaders of the rising had previously secured some of the public galleries whence this handbill was greeted with uproarious applause. A representative rose and cried, "The convention will die at its post." All the assembly solemnly repeated the same oath. The other galleries applauded in their turn. The convention knew the danger it was in. The popular manifesto left no doubt as to what would happen. At the same time no defence nor help was visible. The committee of public safety could not even be sure of the near arrival of the faithful sections. Twelve representatives were charged to go into the sections to enlighten them.

And now women forced themselves in crowds on to the public tribunes. They climbed on the benches, crying "Bread!" The president looked embarrassed. They mocked at him amid the troubled looks of the assembly. Several of them clenched their fists and uttered gross threats.

President Vernier was an honourable old man whose strength was not sufficient to fight against such a tumult. Women continued to shout. All the representatives arose and all talked at once. Among those who were most animated was Ferraud. He was young; generally he was with the military forces; on the 9th Thermidor he had shown great activity and energy. The women recognised him and shouted insolent remarks. They asked his name. "Ferraud" he said. They understood "Fréron"[1] and this increased their fury.

Boissy d'Anglas, the last president but one, was then called to the chair.

[1 Louis Stanislas Fréron had from 1789 edited the violent *Orateur du Peuple*, and had sat among the Mountainists in the convention. He had shown great cruelty in the provinces but had declared against Robespierre, and aided in overthrowing him. After the 9th Thermidor he turned against the Jacobins and the Terrorists and was one of the chief spirits among the *jeunesse dorée*. The starving people therefore hated his name.]

The noise redoubled. There was no way of being heard in such a crowd — a crowd which became every moment more tumultuous. A soldier in the uniform of a brigadier general was found in the hall. He did all he could to silence the women.

The president gave a formal order to clear the hall.

Then a great noise was heard at the hall doors: the knocking was redoubled; evidently a crowd was hurrying to have it opened; the panels were already giving way. The president addressed the unknown general, saying, "Citizen, I nominate you provisionary commander of the forces, and I order you to use your power to make the convention respected." He swore to die at his post in doing so. The general was called Fox. He was a Scotchman who had served in France, and afterwards acted a subordinate part in the troubles with Holland and Brabant. As he had no armed forces, the only exploit he accomplished was to drive away with a whip the women who had occupied the galleries.

The convention did not find itself in very great security, for at that moment the door which was being besieged burst in with a great noise. The crowd came swarming into the hall. National guards and gendarmes advanced with drawn swords and fixed bayonets and pushed back the people. There was a prolonged fight whilst disputing the passage. None wished to shed blood. At last the section of the Fontaine de la Grenelle, the first to bring help to the convention, arrived. It was received with joy and gratitude.

Another crowd composed of armed men now tried to force a way into the convention. Bayonets crossed and the insurgents fired into the midst of those who prevented their entrance. Finally they broke through. The guard was inferior in numbers. Ferraud, in despair, said to them, "Kill me, since you desire blood." He was thrown down, and they passed over his body, treading him underfoot. He was picked up, but had merely fainted. It was then half-past three; the hall was in possession of the rioters, who brandished their swords, shouting, "Bread and the Constitution of 1793!" which was also written on their hats. They took possession of the benches, ousting the representatives; others crowded the floor; one of them sat down opposite the president with his hat on. A young man, son of Representative Mailly, had fought valiantly; the crowd rushed upon him, and he sought refuge on the tribune. Whilst he was getting up, a ball struck him and he fell. The rioters finished him with sword thrusts and he was carried out bleeding.

Already muskets were aimed at the president; Ferraud sprang forward to shield him with his body. One of the murderers held him to prevent his mounting the steps; an officer came to his help and pushed the rioter away. He fired a shot at Ferraud, who fell at the foot of the tribune. Though mortally wounded, he still lived and made efforts to speak. The crowd continued to take him for Frèron. A woman of the streets, shut up as a lunatic some years previously, and set at liberty half cured, was that day, as she generally was, among the rioters, marching at the head of these guillotine furies, drunk with brandy and rage, like the women who followed her. She sprang upon Ferraud, broke his head with kicks and finished him with a knife, with which she also wounded Representative Camboulas who tried to keep her off. The corpse of Ferraud was dragged from the hall by the rioters, who cut off his head.

Boissy d'Anglas remained passive among insults and threats and calmly faced the pistols directed at him. Many citizens surrounded him to defend

him against the furious rabble. They took away his seal of office, but he forced them to return it. However, the tocsin sounded. The garden and court were successively filled by national guards and artillery, but they were without orders or directions. No hindrance was given to the entry of all the crowds from the suburbs. The hall was full of armed men crying, "Bread!" They tried to make speeches; they addressed abusive remarks to the convention. They caused their programme of insurrection to be read. When the president ordered silence, they cried, "Bread, you rascal! What have you done with our money?"

After a confused tumult lasting half an hour, the rioters began to cry again, "Down with the president!" and to strike him on the face. Then a man entered the hall, carrying on high the head of the unhappy Ferraud on a pike. He presented it to the president, to the great joy of the crowd. Boissy d'Anglas, with grave respect, waved away the bleeding head.[1] He tried to profit by a temporary lull to show the rioters that this disorder hindered the convention discussing the subject of subsistences.

A French Officer, end of Eighteenth Century

According to some accounts, when Ferraud's head was held up before him he recoiled in horror — to others, he bowed in homage to the gory head of his courageous colleague.

Finally a successful effort was made to clear the floor. The Mountain sat down on the lower benches; the riot leaders took their places at the top of the hall. Boissy d'Anglas left the chair and refused to preside over such a sitting. Vernier took his place and the Mountain began to deliberate. Not a member of the majority took part in this semblance of a debate. Vernier presided with a sort of mechanical docility. He put things to the vote. The Mountain waved their hats in the air and cried "Aye!" Then Romme, after some words against the rich who lived in luxury and let the poor die of hunger, proposed that it should be forbidden to bake rich cakes and pâtés, and ordered that domiciliary visits be ordained to hunt for hidden flour. The permanence of sections and the popular election of committees was also voted with waving of hats.

[1 Never did courage surpass that of Boissy d'Anglas on this memorable day. For nearly six hours he resisted the efforts of the mob. He had put on his hat, to show that sitting or deliberation was suspended. Neither menaces nor imprecations could make him yield, open the discussion, or put a single proposition to the vote. Thus precious time was gained.c]

However, this parody of a sitting, this insurrectionary inertia, left the committee time to concoct measures, and one might safely predict that the day would end like the 12th Germinal. Duquesnoy understood that it was time to act. He asked that the committee of public safety be suspended; that four representatives be endowed with power extraordinary. This was done. Boissy d'Anglas re-entered the hall and took the chair. Legendre and Delecloy presented themselves in the name of the committee of public safety. They had some trouble in entering, being pushed back and ill-treated. Legendre, however, made himself heard; he intimated that the citizens should leave the hall, and invited the representatives to remain at their posts. Then he went out.

It was midnight. The four commissioners from the Mountain, encouraged by some lively words from Soubrany, left the hall. They met at the door a comparatively small number of the national guard with Legendre, Anguis, Kervelegan, Chénier, and Bergoeng at their head. Raffet commanded the national guard. Prieur de la Marne asked him if he had a presidential order to enter the hall. "I am not accountable to you for what I do," answered the commander. "Follow me, sansculottes!" cried Prieur, turning towards the crowd. The president enjoined him in the name of the law to leave the hall. No attention was paid and the struggle re-commenced. The tramp of soldiers was heard, and the cry, "Down with the Jacobins! Long live the convention!" The crowd began to look around for some means of escape. When the column filed into the hall, there was a general *sauve qui peut;* some climbed to the galleries, seeking a way out, others fled by the windows. Soon an armed force occupied the entire hall. The representatives took their seats; one was sure that the principal Mountainists were secured. In spite of the abominable murder of Ferraud, which recalled revolutionary ferocities, it was soon evident that the rioters had no wish for a fight. They had been taught to cry, "Bread, and the Constitution of 1793!" but were actuated by no definite opinions. The Mountainists lacked boldness and unity. Their discourses and decrees, beyond those which had reference to food, excited no enthusiasm among the people, who hardly understood what was required of them. When, towards 11 o'clock, they saw they were merely assisting at voting and proposals without any result, they began to go out even before the arrival of the national guard.

For some hours there had been round the Tuileries more bayonets than were necessary to force an entrance into the hall. Several times the heads of columns advanced to the doors or showed themselves in the public galleries; but as the crowd remained compact and tumultuous and noisy, they did not wish to run the risk of firing or being fired upon. There was, however, real danger for the representatives who, to get in or out of the hall, had to make a way through the crowd at the door. Some showed great courage; Kervelegan was wounded rather seriously. But the honours of the day rested with Boissy d'Anglas. His firm and unshaken constancy while covered by several guns aimed at him; his presidential authority, so persistent though disregarded; his noble demeanour when they presented the head of his unfortunate colleague — are traits that will be remembered in history and transmitted to all posterity.[d]

FALL OF "THE MOUNTAIN" AND THE LOWER CLASSES

The convention, having recovered its liberty, instantly declared its votes during the presence of the insurrection to be null, and ordered under arrest the remainder of the Mountainists who had shown sympathy with the mob.

The redoubtable faubourg St. Antoine was again defeated, but not crushed. The bands and sections again took the field in a few days, and were met in battle array by the sections favourable to the convention; but no combat ensued. Negotiations, remonstrances, were employed, and the men of the faubourg, deprived of their leader or of all aim,—for the Mountainists had already been conveyed out of their reach,—abandoned their positions and their zeal. Their last feat was to rescue the murderer of Ferraud, who had been condemned, and was proceeding to the scaffold. By this time, however, some troops of the line had been drafted to the capital. At the head of these and the national guards, General Menou, commanding under Barras, invested the faubourg St. Antoine, and menaced to bombard it. The female population dreaded this act of retribution. The faubourg submitted, in token of which its section surrendered their formidable cannon.

Here terminated the influence of the lower orders; here ended the Revolution, as far as they were concerned. It is worthy of remark that their submission was far more the effect of their own apathy than of the force brought against them. This last might, indeed, have awed the most turbulent. But the greater number were weary of disorder, and all showed in the days of Prairial a forbearance and a fear of shedding blood, certainly creditable to them. This arose from the general execration in which the popular massacres of September and the legal ones of the Terror were held. The death of Ferraud was an accident. The safety experienced by the rest of the convention—a safety that allowed them to triumph—marks that even with the mob there are bounds to crime; and that political rage, even with them, when carried to an extreme, has a turn and a recoil.

The Thermidorians, after escaping from such imminent peril, were relentless towards those of their colleagues who had triumphed in the disorder, and who had shown alacrity to restore the Terror. Tidings of a simultaneous effort of the ultra-revolutionists of Toulon increased the exasperation of the victors. All the leading Jacobins were seized, and delivered over to a military commission to be judged. Six deputies of the Mountain were condemned to death. All committed suicide. Only one or two, failing in the attempt, could be delivered over to the guillotine. In the provinces, especially in the south, the moderates did not confine their vengeance to the chief criminals. They rose in many places, especially at Lyons, and massacred those who had practised or favoured terrorism. One half of France having decimated the other, the latter, victorious in turn, proceeded to take the same barbarous revenge. Thus the clambering up from the pit of the Revolution was almost as fearful as the precipitous fall.[c]

LOUIS BLANC ON THE "WHITE TERROR" (MAY–JUNE, 1795)

The promoters of the Red Terror had been men of fierce convictions, fanatics for the public welfare, violent and gloomy souls; but at least they had spoken in accordance with their acts, they had not been seen grinning at humanity with a sword dyed with blood in one hand and their foot upon a heap of dead bodies, and they had not perfumed and adorned themselves before going to the shambles. The promoters or partisans of the White Terror, on the contrary, were men of good address, elegant libertines, fashionable women, people of an unctuous piety. Under the empire of the White Terror, atrocious thoughts were put forth in a ridiculously effeminate gibberish; they swore upon their word of honour that they would stab their disarmed enemy; they killed prisoners with shot or burned them alive,

in virtue of the law of good manners; in the streets, to please the ladies, they flogged daughters who were guilty of weeping over the bodies of their slaughtered fathers. There were to be found men, quite as cruel as Marat, but beauteous in youth and manners that won hearts as they entered a drawing-room in the midst of a cloud of amber perfume. If they had not smelt of amber, they would have smelt of blood.

At Paris and in the north the assassins were held in respect, because in Paris and in the north the Revolution was not yet stamped out; but all the south was given to the sword. Woe to those who, in the Revolution, had enacted any sort of rôle, or only maintained the principles that it had proclaimed. However limited had been their influence, however inoffensive their conduct, however obscure their condition, a tragic death awaited them; for they were not killed only on account of what they had done, they were killed for what they had been or were, or were suspected of being. To provide a list of the victims would be impossible. Prudhomme[e] in his gloomy book, and Fréron[f] in his memoir upon the massacres of the south, are able to record only a certain number of names, yet nevertheless this list, all incomplete as it is, causes us to shudder. In it are boys and girls, almost children, who perished, hacked by sabre cuts or pierced by bayonet thrusts; there are women whom they murdered in cold blood. Men who were suspected as Jacobins were arrested; they watched for the moment when they would be taken to prison, and massacred them on the way. Dead bodies found here and there on all the roads testified in these unhappy places to the ubiquity of the assassin.

Do not the prisons at least serve as a refuge for the victims? No, the magnet does not attract iron with more force than the prisons attracted the murderers; and the aspect of these tragedies was more sinister in the dungeons.

Often they mixed libertinism with the refinements of cruelty; witness the women who, at Montbrison, were dragged to the foot of the Tree of Liberty and exposed quite nude to the lascivious looks of the young royalists, and were then flogged.

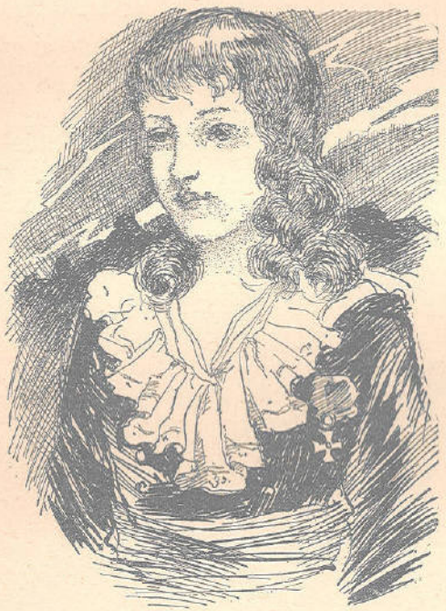
And these things were done in the name of the most sacred principles; for never, at any epoch, were the terms Justice and Humanity employed with so much complacency, until at last they were made part of the necessary vocabulary of the toilette. A woman would not have been in the fashion had she not worn a "humanity bonnet" and "justice corsets." This derisive affectation, this impious frivolity is met with again in the manner in which the reactionaries unblushingly parody the sufferings of those of their relatives whom the Revolution had struck. Wanting in respect for their own grief, they even made a carnival of their own mourning. A son mourned his father, who had died upon the scaffold, by saluting his acquaintance in the street by a movement of his head similar to that of one falling into the executioner's basket. A widow's grief displayed itself in the method of dressing her hair for a lover's rendezvous. The days of general affliction were the days whereon they proceeded to dance, to drink, and to feast to their hearts' content. There were balls "*à la victime*," when to be admitted there it was necessary to show a proper certificate, stating that one had lost a father, a mother, a wife, a brother, or a sister beneath the knife of the guillotine. The death of any collateral relative gave no right to be at such a *fête*. The indispensable costume of a dancer was that in which the brother or sister had perished, that is to say, the red shawl, and the hair cut close to the neck. These conditions fulfilled, they were received to dance, and to make love at the balls "*à la victime*." "Was it Holbein's dance of death," exclaimed

Mercier,[g] "that had inspired such an idea? Why, in the midst of the sounds of violins did they not make a headless spectre dance?"[h]

Among the ugly features of this period, the fate of one of the most pitiful victims of the Revolution may claim a space. This is the little son of the late king, Louis XVI. He was eight years old when his father was executed, and had been called the dauphin for four years. He was recognised as Louis XVII by England and Russia, but his title was a bitter mockery to the child suffering unearned hardships in prison.[a]

BARANTE ON THE CAPTIVITY OF LOUIS XVII

It is difficult not to believe that, at the moment when the convention determined to continue indefinitely the captivity of the son of Louis XVI, the government committees knew that this was equivalent to pronouncing the death sentence on the royal child. When, on the 3rd of July, 1793, he had been pitilessly torn from his mother's arms, the municipal functionaries who had taken on themselves the execution of this business led him away to the room in which the king had been a prisoner, and handed him over to one of their colleagues, whose insulting coarseness the royal family had often had to endure. This was the shoemaker named Simon, long known to Marat as his neighbour in the rue de Cordeliers, and still better as his assiduous admirer at the club. With Robespierre's consent he proposed him as a tutor for the "little Capet." Whether from the natural brutality of his character and the habits of an ignoble life, or whether he had formed beforehand the project of reducing the son of so many kings to being a child without education, without morality, and without shame, he exhibited from the very first day the wish to transform the heir to the throne into a street vagabond. It was a frightful battle that was to be waged against the good and noble sentiments, the regal instincts, and the seemly and distinguished manners which early impressions and the atmosphere in which he was born and had hitherto lived had developed in this noble child.



Louis XVII
(Born 1785)

He began by offering some resistance; his tears were as much of anger as despair. Simon was irritated by these aristocratic ways and soon ill-treatment began; he was continually passing from insulting and threatening words to actual brutalities; his love of equality enjoyed insulting and striking the king's son. He saw, however, that by treating the child intrusted to his care in this fashion, he would end by killing instead of brutalising him.

On this point he consulted the committee of public safety. "The wolf's cub has learned to be insolent; I shall know how to break his spirit; but if he dies under it, I will not be answerable. Do you want to kill him?"—"No." "To poison him?"—"No." "To transport him?"—"No." "To get rid of him?" This time Simon was not answered.

Encouraged by this silence, the tutor whom the republic had given to Louis XVII continued the same system of education. He had wished to make him leave off his mourning clothes, but Marat perished, and he let him retain them. Some days afterwards he dressed him in a carmagnole, had his beautiful fair hair cut off, and put a *bonnet rouge* on his head. A collection has been made with religious care and scrupulous exactness, of all the sad souvenirs of the Temple, all the details of this long torture, in which every day was marked by a fresh atrocity. It is a story which makes the heart ache and fills us with indignation. Simon sought another means of degrading the unhappy child. He made him drink wine and brandy, intoxicated him, and then made him repeat coarse oaths and obscene songs. It chanced that a member of the commune rebuked this wickedness. He was denounced and arrested "for having thought it a bad thing that Capet's son should be brought up like a sansculotte."

The captivity of Louis XVII continued under Simon's rule in alternations of savage violence and indulgence which was neither kindness nor pity. The poor little martyr became more and more self-absorbed and silent. He no longer answered when spoken to. Sometimes Simon's barbarity endangered his life. One day, as he refused to sing some obscene couplets, Simon lifted him up by his hair. "I have a good mind to crush the little viper against the wall," he said. The doctor was obliged to drag the child away from him.

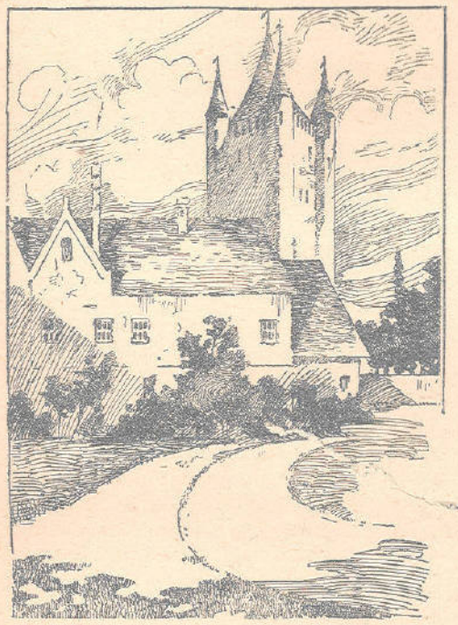
He made him clean his wife's shoes, and one day forced him to wipe his feet which he had just wetted in a bath.

Nevertheless, at the end of seven months, he perhaps grew weary of the infamous business in which he was acquitting himself so well. The unhappy orphan was already half destroyed. Mute, dejected, and trembling, living under menace and in fear, his situation was to grow yet worse. The committees of the convention decided that Simon was not to have a successor, and that the municipal authorities should have all the responsibility of guarding the prisoner.

The room which Cléry had occupied during his attendance on the king was turned into a cell. The door was cut at the height of a man's breast; in front was a grating which was let down from the top. A second grating closed the space of the wicket left above the half door, which was fastened with screws, and the shutters of the window were put up. The room was warmed by a stove-pipe crossing it. The child was shut up in this prison, from which he was not allowed to go out. A bed had been put there. Bread and water were passed to him and no one entered the room. Here Louis XVII was installed on the 21st of January, 1794, the anniversary of the death of the king his father. The *Mémoires du Temple*, written by his august sister, from whom he was rigorously kept apart but who knew how he was being treated, recount the sufferings he endured in this cell.

This phase of torture lasted six months. On the 10th Thermidor, Barras, after the triumph of the convention, recommended the continuance of a strict supervision. One Laurent, a member of the revolutionary committee of the Temple section, was chosen by the committees the very next day to be "charged to guard the tyrant's children detained at the Temple."

This new jailer, true Jacobin though he was, proved capable of humanity and compassion; besides, the revolutionary wind set no longer towards cruelty. First of all he called to his prisoner from the wicket, but no answer could be obtained from the unhappy child. The door was broken open, and then Laurent beheld a most hideous and deplorable spectacle. In a dark, fetid room, full of filth, on a tumbled and dirty bed, lay a child, scantily clothed in a greasy shirt and ragged trousers; an emaciated countenance, discoloured lips, great lustreless eyes, a sickly pallor, an apathetic physiognomy, an expression no longer even of suffering but of insensibility — so did the heir of the crown of France appear to the gaze of his keeper. His body was covered with sores, his joints were swollen; he was eaten by vermin and as though ingrained with dirt. It was in vain to address him. He would not answer, and let his eyes wander vaguely over those who had entered his room. One of them having spoken to him in accents of gentleness and pity, he answered quietly: "No, I want to die."



THE PRISON OF THE TEMPLE

From that time they began to look after the poor orphan; he was placed in a better room, bathed, and given linen and clothing; a surgeon came to dress his sores, a woman was commissioned to wait on him. He was no longer addressed as "thou"; they said "Monsieur," and called him "Charles" and no longer "Capet." Sometimes he was brought to take the air on the platform of the tower, but he still remained weak and ill: he had suffered too much not to have been profoundly affected in health.

It was soon perceived that the symptoms of disease were assuming a graver appearance. He grew more and more sad and inert; sitting motionless at the fireside, he did not feel the warmth. The commissioners decided to inform the committee of public safety of the prisoner's state; they came to make their report on the 26th of February, 1795, declaring that the child appeared to them to be very ill, that his life even was in danger.

On the 6th of May, 1795, more than two months after the visit of the members of the convention, a doctor, Desault, was summoned to the Temple for the first time. Desault declared to the committee that he had been sent for too late to attend the prisoner. He had recognised the germs of scrofula, of which the first dauphin had died in 1789; but it was not the symptoms of this kind of malady which threatened the young prince with an approaching end; he was dying of exhaustion and of a decline. Desault gave no hope of saving him, and asked that he might be removed to the country to try what good effects fresh and healthy air might produce. The committee paid no

attention to the doctor's prescription. On the 31st of May, M. Desault died almost suddenly, of a nervous fever. The committee let five days pass without sending another doctor to the Temple. On the morning of the 8th of June, the child's symptoms became alarming. He said to Gomin, who was pitying him for suffering so much: "I shall not suffer forever."

The keeper knelt in prayer by his bed, the child holding his hand. Soon his ideas became confused. He thought he heard beautiful music coming from above; then it seemed to him that he distinguished his mother's voice. He also spoke of his sister. The other keeper had come to replace Gomin. The air from the window seemed to revive him, but he was dying, dying calmly and without pain; life was flickering out. His head fell on the keeper's breast. "I have something to tell you"—it was his last word. He ceased to breathe; his heart was no longer beating; his martyrdom was consummated.

The next day four members of the committee came to the Temple to verify the decease. They ordered a post-mortem and the report showed that it was not poison which had destroyed the son of Louis XVI, but the popular prejudice has none the less held its ground.[a]

THE PSEUDO-ACCESSION OF LOUIS XVIII (1795 A.D.)

It was claimed by some of the royalists that the poor child had not died but escaped; and a number of alleged dauphins appeared later, but none of them attracted much attention from their own time or deserve any from history, and on the death of the most pathetic child-victim of the great political avalanche, the title of king was assumed by his uncle. The count of Provence was a brother of the late Louis XVI; during the early popular movement he, like Philippe Égalité, showed some opposition to the king, but in June, 1791, he had emigrated to Coblenz, and with his brother the count of Artois, took part in the Declaration of Pillnitz and joined the army of Condé. He was at Hamm in Westphalia when Louis XVI was beheaded and at once declared the dauphin king and called himself regent, under the name of Comte de Lille. On the death of the dauphin, he declared himself Louis XVIII and was so recognised by the powers.[1] He was an exile, however, till after the fall of Napoleon, though his exile was busy with schemes and correspondence with the royalists, in and out of France. To the effects of these schemes we may now return.[a]

LA VENDÉE (1795); ROYALIST INVASIONS

After the disaster to the Vendeans at Savenay, December 23rd, 1793, the republican general Turreau had, as we have seen, split up his army into mobile columns which were christened "infernal," because they carried the decrees of the convention into effect, burned the crops, the woods, and the villages, and forced the inhabitants to leave the country. Charette and Stofflet with their men fought them in detail and often exterminated

[1 Europe, with insulting rapidity, recognised the count of Provence, a refugee at Verona, as Louis XVIII, king of France and Navarre. A man to lead them, a hero to fight at their head, was all the gallant exiles said they required. But the new king was neither manly nor heroic. His brother, the count of Artois, was a libertine in his private life, and a devotee in religious faith; and if he had any share in the blood of Henry IV, carried the white plume of Navarre, not in his helmet, but in his heart. Both the brothers talked of drawing the sword, and fighting for their rights; but they were greater performers with the knife and fork, and heard unmoved of the devotion and death of their followers. — WHITE.a]

whole columns against whom the peasants had the most infuriated hatred. Brittany had exchanged war for war with the republic by means of the *chouannerie*. These were composed mostly of bands of smugglers and parties of Vendeans, escaped from disaster, and united in the rocks and forests. They scattered in parties from fifty to sixty; cut up the roads, destroyed bridges, massacred or terrified the republican authorities. Puisaye, a former member of the constituent assembly, an old Girondist general who had turned royalist, was their leader. He entered into communication with the émigrés and was preparing to go to London to obtain an English fleet and army. The exiled princes hoped little from the European powers, cooled down by republican victories; they depended only on Brittany and La Vendée. The two brothers of Louis XVI and the prince of Condé formed themselves into three rival courts and wasted time in wretched intrigues. The Thermidorian government recalled General Turreau, who would have ended by making a desert of La Vendée. In his stead they appointed General Canclaux, an able and moderate man, who was to try conquest and conciliation.

Young General Hoche, who was sent to Brittany, to his regret saw himself engaged in an obscure and little-known country, but he was nevertheless to disclose talents of the highest order and obtain the highest honours there as peacemaker. Canclaux restored vigorous discipline to his army and surrounded the country with positions which he advanced bit by bit towards the interior. While circulating the convention's proclamations of amnesty he seized cattle and implements until arms were given up. By these means he succeeded. Hoche in Brittany wrote thus to his officers: "Never lose sight of the fact that policy is to play an important part in this war. Employ by turns humanity, virtue, integrity, strength, cunning, and always a dignity becoming republicans. These peasants must have priests, it seems; let them have them, as they wish to. Many have suffered and sigh again for agricultural life; let them be helped to restore their farms. As to those who have relinquished everything for war, to return them to their own country would be to make them the victims of their own idleness and restlessness. Form them into battalions and enroll them in the republican armies. They will make excellent material for the advance-guard, and their hatred of the coalition which has failed to help them will be a guarantee of their good faith."

Charette, the first to be reduced by distress, agreed to negotiate. He had acquiesced in the conference of La Jaulnaye (February, 1795). Religious liberty, an indemnity of two millions, a promise to rebuild burned houses, and permission to form a territorial guard in the pay of the state, were granted him. The representatives, as a mark of favour, accorded Charette a triumphal entry into Nantes, where he was received with cries of, "Long live the Republic! Long live Charette!" A little later Cormatin and Stofflet, commanders in upper Vendée, also acceded to this treaty and obtained similar terms.

But the royalists showed no intention of yielding. This peace to them was nothing more than a truce. Charette himself had no intention of keeping it. Hoche knew this; yet he had nevertheless advocated its accomplishment. A few months of rest ought to cool the ardour of the royalists, and display the moderation of the republicans, thus rallying to their side the majority of the Vendeans and Bretons. In point of fact this is just what happened. The royalist insurrection was controlled by two committees — one in Paris, one in London. The first corresponded with the regent who styled himself Louis XVIII, the second dealt only with Pitt. But there was no understanding between them. Charette was Louis' general. Puisaye in Brittany was the arm of Pitt. He had just come to an understanding with the British government and it was arranged that a considerable fleet should bring him an army of émigrés and ammunition into Brittany. But the expedition divided into three. The first convoy consisted of nine vessels and carried 3,600 émigrés and 80,000 muskets. Puisaye ordered it to Brittany when the English and émigrés would have preferred to land in La Vendée. This fleet, after having beaten some French vessels opposing it, moored in the bay of Quiberon. This bay is bordered on the one side by the coast of Brittany; on the other by a peninsula nearly a league across and two in length; it is the famous peninsula of Quiberon. It joins the mainland by a narrow tongue of soil about one league in length and called La Falaise. The fort of Penthièvre, situated between La Falaise and the peninsula, forms the landward defences. The émigrés, disembarking on this tongue of land, wasted valuable time. Dissensions broke out between their leaders. It disgusted them to fight side by side with coarse ragged men like the Chouans.[1] The Chouans on their part grumbled and complained that they were to be sacrificed to the regulars. Nevertheless they effected the occupation of the fort at Penthièvre and advanced some leagues inland. But Hoche bestirred himself. He pushed the royalists back and succeeded in shutting them up in the peninsula. Soldiers set about digging trenches to complete the blockade.

Puisaye in spite of this succeeded in bringing his peasants to different points of the coast to attack Hoche in the rear, whilst he charged him in front. This plan, well conceived, was ill carried out, and the republicans gaining the day (at Ste. Barbe, July 16th, 1795), pressed the émigrés closer and closer.[k]

HOCHE AT QUIBERON

On the evening of the 2nd Thermidor (July 20th) at low tide, three columns of republican troops marched on Fort Penthièvre. The central one was to attack the front from the rocks, that of the right and left entered the sea, the first to turn the tower, the second to scale it. The columns of the centre and right were discovered at dawn of day by the enemy. Confounded by the batteries of the émigrés and the English sloops, they fell back in disorder, until one of their leaders called out, "Do you fly, when the fort is ours?" The rising sun saw the tricolour flag floating on Fort Penthièvre.

The left column, guided by three intrepid deserters, in a dark night, in torrents of rain, and across a momentarily rising sea, had come, without being perceived, to the foot of the rocks, and had scaled them. The comrades of the deserters who were in the fort helped the "blues" to scale the wall. All of the émigrés in the fort were exterminated. The two other columns quickly rallied, threw themselves in front, and seized the batteries which

[1 The émigrés and the Chouans accused each other of cowardice and treachery by turns. These disorders of the head were presages of little good. The gentlemen could accustom themselves neither to the mode of life nor the warfare of the Chouans; some even (but, one must own, only the minority) amused themselves by holding up to ridicule the simple manners, the extravagant costumes, and the rough dialect of those whose efforts they were assisting. The peasants, already exasperated with submission to a new development, nourished baneful retaliations in their hearts. Anarchy ruled amongst the royalist chiefs, and also amongst the soldiers, everyone gave orders, and by a telling contrast it was in the revolutionary ranks that the absolute power on the part of the general, and the submission and discipline which constitute an army and contribute to success, were to be found. — CRÉTINEAU. *j*]

had cannonaded them. The remnants of the regiments of émigrés in cantonments beyond the fort and in the peninsular villages ran too late to help. These regiments included a number of prisoners, who immediately turned face and joined the "blues," crying "*Vive la République!*"

The émigrés fell back in disorder from post to post. The few remaining Chouans threw away their arms and the red coats which had been given them, and fled pell-mell with their wives and children, cursing the émigrés and the English. This scared multitude fled as far as Port Haliguen and the smaller fortress of St. Pierre at the extreme end of the peninsula. Beyond that there was nothing but the ocean. Puisaye, seeing all lost, threw himself into a boat to rejoin the English admiral, abandoning those whom he had led to their death, in the hope of recommencing the adventure. But it must be remembered that the mistakes that had so quickly ruined the enterprise were not his, but another's.

Young Sombreuil, remaining in charge, saw before him only a small advance-guard of 700 republican grenadiers, far less numerous than the débris of his troops. An English frigate by its fire protected the émigrés, and boats were put off to collect the men. However, Hoche, having hastened to the advance-guard, did not give them time to re-embark. He opened a cannonade on the English ships and summoned the "rebels" to lay down their arms under penalty of being thrown into the sea or of being bayoneted. Many émigrés and Chouans were drowned in trying to reach the fleet; others plunged swords into their breasts, knowing they had nothing to hope for. The majority laid down their arms and gave themselves up, Sombreuil at their head. This implied no lack of courage on his part. He hoped his unlucky companions would be spared. There was no capitulation; the rigorous laws against the émigrés did not admit of their general making them any promises. Hoche did what he could and sent back the wives and children and the republican soldiers, treated the prisoners with humanity and abstained from any demonstrations likely to aggravate their misfortunes.

Seventy thousand rifles, many cannon, and immense stores of provisions — all that Pitt had prepared to arm and carry on a civil war in France — remained in the hands of the republicans. Ten milliards of false assignats were found in the baggage and burned. Sixteen hundred French prisoners enrolled by the émigrés were sent back to their homes. There remained captive royalists to the number of nearly 4,700, [illegible] 3,600 Chouans, 550 military émigrés, and 500 Toulon fugitives, who [illegible] were consequently carried on a bloody war against their country.[l]

Tallien hastened to Paris to ask for orders. He was told that the law against returned royalists must be carried out. About seven hundred émigrés, amongst whom was Sombreuil, were shot in a field at Auray. Pitt in relating the disaster at Quiberon to the English parliament, betrayed his indifference by saying: "No English blood has been shed." "That is true," replied Sheridan in an eloquent reply, "but English honour has been shed from every pore."[k]

CHARETTE'S MASSACRE AND END OF THE REVOLT

The disaster of Quiberon and the peace concluded with Spain, which signalised the end of this month, might have discouraged Charette. His hopes were perhaps diminished, but his courage was neither less energetic nor less obstinate on that account. From Verona and London promises of help came promptly. M. de Rivière returned to announce to him that Monsieur would come and join the Vendeans with an expedition preparing

in England. Charette therefore restored to the war its former character of fury and bitterness. His first successes had placed three or four hundred prisoners in his power. At first he had thought of negotiating an exchange of captives, but the representatives and General Canclaux had refused this. Some time after, when Charette learned that Sombreuil and the Quiberon prisoners had been put to death, he sent for two of the prisoners and said to them: "Go and inform the generals and the civil authorities of the manner in which you have hitherto been treated in my army, and of the attentions which have been paid to you. It is with pain that I find myself obliged to have recourse to reprisals in order to avenge the death of the prisoners of Quiberon. But I must, if possible, prevent similar barbarities. Not one of your comrades will be alive to-morrow, and for the future I will act thus every time that royalist prisoners are butchered."

A French Soldier, Close of the Eighteenth Century

This terrible threat was carried out when Charette was about to leave Belleville and bear towards the coast where an English convoy was to land munitions which were being sent to him. It was a Sunday and the general's staff was attending high mass, when, in the midst of the sacred chants, horrible cries made themselves heard. The soldiers who formed Charette's bodyguard had conducted the prisoners into a wood close to the village and were massacring them with blows from pikes and sticks. The general, on leaving mass, saw his men returning, all covered with blood and bearing in triumph the spoils of their victims. An officer had presided at this frightful work and was boasting of it. "Leave my presence," said Charette to him; "you are unworthy of the rank of officer." This indignation against the murderers was not [illegible] to pity for the victims. More than a hundred had just been slaughtered, but there still remained two hundred prisoners. These were shot in the courtyard of the château of Belleville. The Vendean population by no means approved this massacre. The republican army of the west coast was resuming the war in a regular manner — it was under discipline and commanded by a general of temperate character and political instincts; the inhabitants were not being exterminated, nor were their houses being burned, nor their harvests any longer carried off. It was no longer the days of the *colonnes infernales*. Poitou and the left bank of the Loire did not present a spectacle similar to that which was being enacted in Brittany, and the country of *chouannerie*.[d]

Hoche followed up his success at Quiberon by proceeding to attack the insurgents of La Vendée. The count of Artois, who had joined them, behaved with gross incapacity, and at length abandoning them to their fate, embarked for England. Stofflet, defeated by Hoche near Bressuire, was

captured soon afterwards, and executed at Angers in February, 1796. His brave comrade, Charette, having disbanded his troops, was hunted for days together through the forests and marshes, and being at last taken prisoner, was conducted to Nantes, where he was shot, March 29th, 1796. After this event Hoche gradually succeeded in pacifying the northwest of France.[n]

PEACE WITH SPAIN (JULY, 1795)

Meanwhile the royalist party, which had sustained so rude a check at Quiberon, found a discomfiture equally fatal preparing for it in Spain. Moncey had again entered Biscay, taken Bilboa and Vitoria, and was closely pressing Pamplona. The favourite who governed the court of Madrid, after repudiating the overtures of peace made by the French government at the commencement of the campaign, because he was not the medium through which they were submitted, now determined to negotiate, and despatched the chevalier Yriarte to Bâle. The peace was signed at that place with the envoy of the republic, Barthélemy, on the 24th Messidor (12th of July), the very time when disasters were thickening so portentously at Quiberon. The conditions were the restitution of all the conquests of France on the territory of Spain, and, in requital, the cession to France of the Spanish portion of Santo Domingo. Here France made great concessions for an advantage almost illusory, for Santo Domingo no longer belonged to either power; but those concessions were dictated by the soundest policy. France had nothing to covet beyond the Pyrenees; she had no interest in weakening Spain: on the contrary, it behoved her, had it been possible, to restore to that power the strength it had lost in a contest so detrimental to the interests of both nations.

This peace was hailed with the most lively satisfaction by all who loved France and the republic. It detached another power from the coalition, it showed a Bourbon recognising the republic, and it rendered two armies disposable for transfer to the Alps, the west, or the Rhine. The royalists were struck with consternation. The agents at Paris, especially, dreaded lest their intrigues might be divulged, lest their letters to Spain should be made public. England would have read therein their real sentiments respecting her; and, although that power was grossly vituperated for the affair of Quiberon, it was henceforth their only pecuniary resource.[m]

CAMPAIGN IN THE EAST AND SOUTH

France was less fortunate, in the course of this year, on the eastern frontier.[1] Pichegru had abandoned the command of the army of the North

[1 According to Jomini[p] the distribution of the republican forces at the commencement of the campaign of 1795 was as follows, in effective troops, deducting the detachments and sick:

	Active.	Garrisons.	Nominal, including garrisons.
North	67,910	29,000	136,250
Sambre and Meuse	87,630	66,000	170,300
Rhine and Moselle	56,820	96,800	193,670
Alps	14,000	4,800	21,000
Italy	27,500	24,000	98,500
Eastern Pyrenees	43,290	4,000	82,790
Western Pyrenees	33,780	5,000	75,180
West	42,000	..	70,200
Shores of Brittany	51,000	..	78,400
Cherbourg	26,000	..	37,700
	449,930	229,000	958,990]

to take that of the army of the Rhine; he occupied the left bank of that river from Mainz to Strasburg; Jourdan, with the army of the Sambre and Meuse (Maas), was quartered on the Rhine near Cologne. The allies had lost all the left bank, except Luxemburg and Mainz. The first of these places succumbed to famine, June 24th, and from that time the French aim was to cross the river, whose right bank was defended by the Austrians, under Clerfayt and Wurmser. But the French armies lacked all necessaries, were in want of munitions and pontoon-trains; therefore they had to wait several months. At last, September 6th, Jourdan effected the passage in three different places, in the neighbourhood of Düsseldorf; Pichegru crossed the river almost at the same time opposite to the strong fort of Mannheim, which surrendered almost immediately. The two armies, by combining their manœuvres and uniting in the valley of the Main, could have opposed Clerfayt and Wurmser, and would have vanquished one after the other; but this plan was not adopted.

Pichegru was in communication with the prince of Condé, chief of the émigrés: he already contemplated betraying the republic, and compromised his army and that of Jourdan by the weakness of his manœuvres: he gave Clerfayt time to fall upon him with superior forces, allowed himself to be shamefully beaten at Heidelberg, and shut himself in Mannheim.[1] Clerfayt then attacked Jourdan, who, separated from Pichegru, shut in on one side by the Rhine, on the other by the neutral territory of Prussia, and lacking provisions, was forced to retreat, and recrossed the river. Thirty thousand Frenchmen still invested Mainz. Clerfayt, by a bold and skilful manœuvre, forced their line, and drove the French armies back to the foot of the Vosges on the left bank of the Rhine. Only the towns of Mannheim, Düsseldorf, and Neuwied remained to France on the right bank. An armistice followed this defeat, and the troops entered cantonments.

Brilliant successes in Piedmont compensated for the check of the armies of the Rhine. The important treaty concluded with Spain had permitted the union of the two armies of the Pyrenees and the Maritime Alps, under Kellermann. The union of these forces made it possible to take the offensive, and after a brilliant victory to force the passage of the Apennines and compel Piedmont to become neutral. Kellermann was replaced by Schérer, whose army, surrounded by the sea and the Apennine chain, was opposed to the Piedmontese army, under Colli, and the Austrian army: the latter extended from the summit of the Apennines in the basin of Loano down to the sea; the former occupied the opposite side of the mountains towards the Po, strongly entrenched in the camp of Ceva. Schérer attempted a bold stroke; Masséna, by his order, crossed the summit of the Apennines, and separated the two armies of the enemy, while Serrurier deceived Colli by a false attack, and Augereau drove back the Austrians to the basin of Loano. A complete victory was the result of this skilful

[1 Honoured by the republicans, and with the greatest military reputation in France, Pichegru had taken command of the armies of the North, the Sambre and Meuse, and the Rhine. When his fame was thus at its height he became a traitor, and for the promise of a marshal's baton, the governorship of Alsace, the castle of Chambord, 1,000,000 francs in cash, and 200,000 francs a year, sold his army and his country. He allowed Jourdan to be beaten before Mannheim, and betrayed all his plans to the enemy. His intrigues were suspected, and when he offered his resignation to the Directory in October, 1795, it was to his surprise promptly accepted. Pichegru's campaigns of 1794 are marked by traits of an audacious genius which would not have disgraced Napoleon; like him, he perceived the intrinsic fitness of the French soldiers for strokes of daring rather than for sustained battles. But a more thorough traitor never commanded an army. He flattered in turn Saint-Just and the terrorists, the Thermidorians and the directors, and seemed altogether unmoved by considerations of loyalty or patriotism.[t]]

manœuvre; the enemy was overwhelmed and put to flight, a storm of wind and snow covered their headlong flight; twenty guns and an immense amount of ammunition fell into the hands of the victors, and Italy lay open to the French.

Thus, with the exception of the check which had driven back the French armies in the east, the republic had met only with victories in the course of 1795. In the north it had conquered the whole of Holland, and in the south the passage of the Apennines, the door of Italy; the hopes which Brittany and La Vendée had founded on England vanished at Quiberon. In fact, three of the powers had laid down their arms: Prussia, Holland, and Spain. The cause of the émigrés seemed lost abroad, and all hopes were fixed on the reactionary movement at home: this movement, directed in the first place by moderate republicans, soon became royalist and tried its strength against the violence of the revolutionary action.[r]

The convention, in the meantime, was drawing to its natural term. All France was weary of its rule; and public opinion, though extending pardon on account of its late recovery of courage and moderation, still could not forget its pusillanimity, its betrayal of the liberty and lives of the whole nation to tyrants, its crimes, the mutual slaughter of its members — its reign, in short, of three years, uniting in that small space more than three centuries of any history could present of guilt, anarchy, and suffering. In these three eventful years, the convention had isolated itself, its opinions, and its interests from France, which it certainly could no longer be said to represent. The higher classes, or such of them as survived, abhorred it as regicide; those of common and of middling fortune, the bourgeoisie of towns, were averse likewise to the body which decreed the "maximum" and deluged the land with a valueless paper money, and which still screened the terrorists. The lower orders and the speculative democrats who led them held in equal hate the conquerors of Prairial. If the convention were dissolved, in this state of public feeling, the members could not hope for re-election. The administration of the state would pass into other hands, which might not only modify the government, but think fit to punish the Thermidorians themselves. Tallien himself was weighed down with crime; Fouché equally, Carnot too — all heroes and leaders in the convention, but without any supporters whatsoever in the nation. To save themselves, in other words to perpetuate their power, was therefore the first consideration with the convention; and this was no easy matter to accomplish, considering that a share of liberty and of republican organisation was still necessary.

A commission of eleven had been long employed upon a new constitution. They had undertaken the task to satisfy the clamours of the democratic party, at that time uncrushed. They had been chosen, too, amongst the best informed and most honourable members of the convention, those belonging to the committees of government being excluded.[e]

DARESTE ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE YEAR III (1795 A.D.)

The commission of the Eleven, nominated to make organic laws, made in reality a new constitution. The report was read on the 23rd of June, 1795, by Boissy d'Anglas: "An auspicious time has come," he said, "in which we no longer fight as gladiators for liberty, but in which we can be the founders of that liberty." Passing in review, according to custom, the events of the past five years, he gave an interpretation that had never been put upon

them before. He showed the republic, corrupted for some time past by usurpers and scoundrels who had used the Paris commune and the Jacobin club only as their instruments. He called the crude work which had been dignified by the name of the Constitution of 1793 "organised anarchy." He ridiculed the mockery of acceptation obtained by corruption, force, and terror. He declared it impracticable, with its one and absolute assembly, holding from primary assemblies, which was an illusion, and dominating an executive council with no power or dignity. He accused its originators of ignorance and ineptitude, since they had not ruled on the most important points, such as the right of declaring war or proposing peace; also, for having recognised the right of insurrection without establishing any method of repressing sedition. What was really needed was a free constitution which would be the work of common sense. The scheme of the Eleven was definitely accepted the 10th of August after a serious discussion.

The new constitution, unlike its predecessors, bore the impress of experience acquired by six years of revolution. It began by a declaration of rights; but to liberty and equality were added security of personal property. Individual liberty was guaranteed; arbitrary arrest was proscribed. Assurance of justice and a fair trial were promised to everyone under every circumstance. It was ordered that all taxes should be assessed equitably from all citizens according to their ability; this was in condemnation of forced loans. No individual, no group of citizens could hold sovereign power; this condemned the Jacobins. It was recognised that suffrage was the right of every citizen. But two conditions were attached to this right — one year of domicile and the payment of a tax. Later on, that is from the year XII, it was added that every elector must know how to read and write and prove his knowledge of his profession. Those who had served in one or two campaigns since the establishment of the republic were exempted from the tax.

The legislative body (and this was the greatest change) was to be composed of two chambers. One of 500 members, hence called the council of the Five Hundred, the other of 250, to be called the council of Ancients because every member had to be at least forty years of age, whereas thirty years sufficed for the other. The two councils were to be elected in the same way, which would exclude the monarchical idea of a life senatorship and the aristocratic idea of a hereditary peerage. They had equal rights, with this exception — that the Five Hundred alone could propose laws, propositions which had then to be submitted to the formality of three readings.

The Eleven demanded a strong independent executive power, which should occupy an honoured and brilliant position, but they did not desire a presidency, which would be a disguised return to monarchy, nor a double consulate, which was only a weakened and vicious form of presidency. Neither did they desire that the chief statesmen should be elected directly by the country. That would give them too much power. So they established a directory of five members, named by the legislative body and renewable by one-fifth of its members every year; the presidency being quarterly and alternative. To this body was given the duty of watching over the interior and exterior safety of the republic; of proposing war; of carrying on the same when it had been voted by a decree of the legislative body; of disposing of the armed forces; negotiating treaties (subject to ratification); of promulgating and executing laws.

Yet the Directory would only be the deliberative part of the government. Action would rest with the ministers it chose. The ministers, who were to act, did not form a council, held no deliberations, and did not communicate

with the legislative body. They were responsible, but individually, and to the Directory. This latter was answerable to the legislative body, by which it could be brought to judgment under specified forms. However, as it was strongly desired not to return to a tyranny such as had been the committee of public safety, the Directory was not allowed the initiative of law-making, nor the authority to judge authors of plots otherwise than by the ordinary forms. None of its members could command an army. Finally, the treasury was confided to five independent commissioners named by the councils.

It was necessary to reconstruct the departmental administration. A return was made to the custom of elective directors for each department, in number limited to five, adding to these a commissioner named by government. It was a simple reform, already demanded by Condorcet.

The high court of justice was reconstituted and at each session consisted of judges that the court of cassation named from its own numbers. Every possible guarantee was granted to individual liberty.

The constitution would need remodelling. In this case it was necessary that the changes should be proposed by the council of Ancients and accepted by the Five Hundred consulted thrice at a three years' interval. The primary assembly then named an assembly of revision, composed of two members from each department. These latter, acting in prescribed form, and keeping strictly to the object in view, prepared new articles for the constitution.

Many additional articles went to confirm the liberty of the press, without any censorship: writers being liable to action only when there was a direct violation of law. Individual liberty of conscience with regard to religion was guaranteed; every sect being equally protected and none salaried; liberty in all professions, in commerce, industry, the arts; inviolability of property, dispossession taking place only with due formality and with proper indemnity; prohibition of associations or corporations opposed to public order; prohibition for any society to have correspondence with other societies, or to admit the public to its meetings, to purge its membership; the maintenance of the right of petition, but in virtue of individual, not collective right; prohibition of tumultuous assemblies armed or not armed, with rules for dispersing them; the institution of a particular dress for the legislative body and public officials.

Finally, two important points were regulated: first, the most recent law with regard to émigrés was final and was not to be modified, secondly, the sale of national property already made was not to be questioned, at least suits reclaiming property could result only in a pecuniary indemnity. These stipulations were made with the object of assuring stability for the fresh state of affairs created by the Revolution, and to hinder a reversal of fortunes.

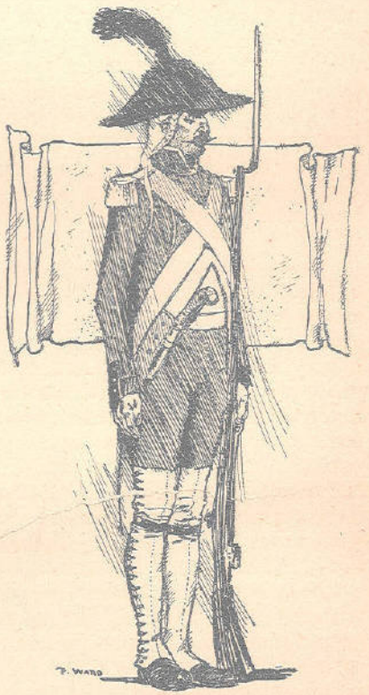
Such was the constitution of the year III, a work of conciliation wrought by experience, and incontestably superior to its predecessors. It represented the institutions of '89 and '91 amended and made practicable. Doubtless there can be seen in it inevitable marks of private interests, of passion, and some essential vices, that were not long in manifesting themselves.[1] The illusory responsibility of the directors, the irresponsibility of the ministers, the permanence of the assemblies, created enormous and unforeseen difficulties. However, the constitution of '95, accepted with less enthusiasm than the preceding ones because it was the third or fourth, and because faith in such charters was dead, was appreciated by enlightened minds.

[1 Duruy says that the constitution, "hoping to escape a dictatorship and form a moderate republic, achieved only a republic of weakness and anarchy."]

THE 13TH VENDÉMIAIRE (OCT. 5TH, 1795)

Such was the directorial constitution, which was voted without difficulty by the convention. It was, however, far from reassuring the leading members, or the majority of the assembly, who could not mistake in the public the universal symptoms of their unpopularity. The form of government being now in discussion, it was of course free to all to entertain opinions thereon.

There remained a strong party in the capital whose rallying point was war to the terrorists and hatred to the convention. Many were monarchically inclined, and the ancient royalists, raising their heads, began to intrigue and make partisans. The convention made use of the pretext to pass a decree that only one-third of their number should be immediately re-elected, the remaining two-thirds to subsist, one-half to be renewed in eighteen months, the other at a more distant period; moreover, that the convention was itself to make choice of the two-thirds destined to be of the new legislature. This was, in fact, to constitute and secure the majority. Never was a more gross and dictatorial act committed. The Parisian citizens were indignant. They united in their sections, declaimed with all the fury of Jacobins, though in a very different sense, against this new tyranny. Petitions were drawn up, and the boldest remonstrances sent to the convention.



A French Infantryman, Close of the Eighteenth Century

The convention, however, though it could look for support to no rank of citizens, was highly popular with the army, which it had sent to victory, and which had been disciplined to fear and to obey it. The tactics of the convention, therefore, were to bring the army to its aid. A camp was formed in the plain of Sablons, near Paris. In order to give some colour to their usurpation, they ordered the new constitution and the additional decrees to be submitted to all the primary assemblies of France, and also the armies. This was no small flattery to the latter. The new constitution and its additional decrees were voted with acclamation by the army. The sections, or primary assemblies of the capital, approved the constitution; but unanimously rejected the decrees perpetuating the two-thirds of the convention. In the provinces, however, the importance of the decrees was not perceived; the opinions and enlightened views of the capital were slow in reaching them. And although it was notorious that the anti-terrorist party was even stronger in the provinces than in Paris; yet the constitution, including the decrees, was declared to have the assent of the primary assemblies almost unanimously. The directorial constitution and the decrees were declared law, and the new system of government was to commence in November.

The rage of the Parisians against the convention now knew no bounds. They met, declaimed, petitioned, and those attached to the Bourbon cause were active in stirring the flame. The Bourbonists did infinite harm; for absolute power, an aristocracy with feudal privileges, and all the ills of the ancient régime, were associated with the name. The army and the terrorists, and the extreme revolutionists, rallied to the convention; and the sections, or Parisian citizens, were weighed down by the obloquy incident to their royalist opinions, which did not really form one hundredth part of their general feeling.

As the convention resumed its usurpation, and even proposed to name the Directory, without waiting for the new legislature, the sections proceeded to form their electoral assembly, which they might take as a general council. It had been convoked at as late a day as possible. The sections anticipated it, and named each their elector, who met at the then Théâtre Français, now the Odéon. The convention ordered a column of troops to march and disperse the meeting. It had taken place, however, and had separated ere the troops arrived. Thus menaced, the committee of government thought fit to accept the offers of the old popular leaders, the terrorists, who, smothering their griefs, offered their aid against the sections. These men were armed and mustered; but a sufficient proof of how fallen was the party, was found in the fact that their number did not exceed 1,500, whilst the national guard of the sections counted 40,000 citizens.

The arming of the terrorists occasioned fresh alarms. The sections met. That of Lepelletier, forming the central and wealthy commercial quarter, declared itself in permanence and in insurrection. The example was imitated; and a civil war was declared betwixt the convention, which sought to perpetuate its dictatorial authority, and the Parisians resolved to contest it. The assembly again summoned the army from its camp to menace and disarm the section Lepelletier. General Menou accordingly led a strong force, which he posted in the rue Vivienne, and thence summoned the insurgent section. It presented itself in battle array to Menou, who begged of it to disperse. The citizens refused. The general, disliking to attack the inhabitants, was glad to enter into a compromise. Menou retired to his camp, while the section Lepelletier continued to occupy its hall.

The foregoing scene took place on the 12th Vendémiaire (the 4th of October); the sections were of course emboldened by their success, and made preparations for attacking the convention on the morrow. The assembly in turn took its measures, exclaimed against the weakness of Menou, and looked round for an officer to succeed him. Barras was appointed. But aware of his inability to meet a force of 40,000 national guards with merely 5,000 soldiers, he in turn looked round for some officer more skilled and energetic than himself.

His sagacity found this officer in Bonaparte, then in Paris, and disengaged; who gladly accepted the task, having been from the commencement of his career attached to the extreme democratic party, which he admired for its energy, and pardoned for its terrorism. The plan instantly pursued by Bonaparte was to make use of the arm familiar to him, the artillery; to stand on the defensive, occupying every avenue to the palace of the convention; and thus with concentrated forces to repel the attack of the citizens. These on their side mustered in their sections, formed in columns, and marched to overwhelm the convention and its small number of defenders. The sections, however, were without any eminent leader. Their only hope was in simultaneous and combined attacks; unless, indeed, they adopted the

plan later recommended by Thiers, and followed with such success in July, 1830.[1]

The plan could not be worse organised. A great many of the sectionaries quitted their ranks for want of ammunition, which had not been provided. At length, those of the north side of the river advanced to the church of St. Roch, occupied it, and prepared to penetrate by the rue du Dauphin to the Tuileries. Here Bonaparte in person — there was no attack elsewhere to distract him — received the assailants with a determined fire of grape, that soon routed them;[2] he pursued them in the rue St. Honoré, which he equally swept with cannon. Those of the fugitives who did not shrink to their homes hurried to the other side of the river, to join the sections of the faubourg St. Germain in their attack, which had not yet been made. When they did appear, menacing the Pont Royal, Bonaparte was here also to receive them, where his cannon, meeting with no impediment along open quays, long streets, and an unencumbered bridge, worked tenfold havoc, and not only succeeded in routing, but in disheartening the sections. Thus fell the cause of the citizens and national guard before the will of the convention, supported by the army and a few of the democrats. The sections were disarmed, the anarchists humbled, the Bourbonists obliged to fly. The convention, resolving itself, with most glaring absurdity, into an electoral assembly, fixed upon two-thirds of its body, which were to constitute the majority of the new legislature, declared its session terminated on the 26th of October, 1795 (4th Brumaire, year IV), and called this act "a dissolution."[c]

DURUY'S RÉSUMÉ OF THE PRINCIPAL CREATIONS OF THE CONVENTION

The imperious necessities of the strife had not allowed the assemblies to realise all their projected reforms. They had however at least prepared immense quantities of materials for the succeeding generation to utilise. Meanwhile, in the midst of commotions and victories, the convention, to strengthen the unity of France, had prepared a uniform code; established national education; created normal and polytechnical schools, normal and primary central schools (*lycées*), schools of medicine, chairs of living languages, a bureau of longitudes, a conservatory of music, the Institute, the museum of natural history, and fixed the uniformity of weights and measures (the metrical system). By the reckless issuing of assignats (44,000,000,000) it had demolished public wealth, and by the "maximum law" it had destroyed commerce; but by the sale of the national lands, which comprised a third of the territory, it had opened up to cultivation by the new proprietors immense domains till then unproductive. By the creation of ledgers of the public debt it had prepared for better days a renewed confidence in the

[1 "There was a manœuvre much more prudent for the sections than that of exposing their force in deep columns to the fire of Bonaparte's cannon. This was to form barricades in the streets, to invest the assembly and its troops in the Tuileries, to get possession of the surrounding houses, and to open from every window and aperture a murderous fire on the supporters of the convention, slaying them one by one and reducing them by famine. But the sectionaries only thought of a *coup-de-main;* and hoped by a single charge to make their way, and to force the gates of the palace."—THIERS.[m]]

[2 "'It is false,' says Napoleon, 'that we fired first with blank charge; it had been a waste of life to do that.' Most false: the firing was with sharp and sharpest shot: to all men it was plain that here was no sport; the rabbets and plinths of St. Roch Church shew splintered by it to this hour. — Singular: in old Broglie's time, six years ago, this Whiff of Grapeshot was promised; but it could not be given then; could not have profited then. Now, however, the time is come for it, and the man; and behold, you have it; and the thing we specifically call 'French Revolution' is blown into space by it, and become a thing that was!" — CARLYLE.[6]]

credit of the state. The invention of the telegraph allowed of the rapid transmission of orders from the central government to the frontiers; and the establishment of museums awakened a taste for the arts. The convention desired, moreover, that the infirm and the orphans should be cared for by the state; and the last decree of these terrible legislators was for the abolition of capital punishment after a general peace should be established.[s]

After the convention had promulgated, in solemn form, the union of Belgium with France, and its subdivision into departments, it resolved to terminate its long and tempestuous career by a signal homage to humanity. It decreed that the punishment of death should be abolished in the French Republic from the period of general peace; it changed the name of the place de la Révolution to that of place de la Concorde; and it pronounced an amnesty for all acts having reference to the Revolution, save for the revolt of the 13th Vendémiaire. This was setting at liberty the men of all parties, except Lemaitre, against whom alone of all the conspirators of Vendémiaire sufficient proofs to warrant condemnation existed. All the prisons were ordered to be thrown open. At length, two hours and a half after midday of the 4th Brumaire, year IV (26th of October, 1795), the president of the convention delivered these words: "The national convention declares that its mission is fulfilled, and its session terminated." Cries enthusiastically repeated of "Long live the Republic!" accompanied and followed these last words.

Thus closed the protracted and memorable session of the national convention. The constituent assembly had found the old feudal organisation to destroy and a new organisation to construct: the task of the legislative assembly had been to essay this new organisation, burdened with the king left as a component part of the constitution. After an experiment of several months, it ascertained and proclaimed the incompatibility of the king with the new institutions, and his confederacy with coalesced Europe; it suspended the king and the constitution, and abdicated its functions. The convention, therefore, on its convocation, encountered a dethroned king, an abrogated constitution, war declared against Europe, and, as resources in the emergency, an administration utterly subverted, a paper-money greatly depreciated, and antiquated forms of regiments, hollow and emasculated skeletons. Thus, it was not liberty the convention had to assert in presence of an enfeebled and contemned throne; it was liberty it had to defend against all Europe — a task of very different import. Undaunted in the crisis, it proclaimed the republic in the teeth of the hostile armies; it immolated the king to render its contest irrevocable; eventually it arrogated all authority, and resolved itself into a dictatorship. Within its own pale, voices arose to invoke humanity when it would hear only of energy; it stifled them.

Speedily this dictatorship, which it had assumed over France in the exigency of general peril, twelve members assumed over it, for the like reason and in aggravated exigency. From the Alps to the ocean, from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, those twelve dictators seized upon all, men and things, and commenced with the nations of Europe the greatest and most terrible struggle recorded in history. In order to remain supreme directors of this mighty undertaking, they smote all parties successively; and, according to the condition of human weakness, they exhibited their qualities in their extremes. Those qualities were fortitude and energy; the excess was cruelty. They shed torrents of blood, until, become useless through victory and odious by the abuse of power, they succumbed. The convention thereupon resumed the dictatorship, and began by degrees to relax the springs of its redoubtable

administration. Tranquillised regarding its safety by victory, it listened to the voice of humanity, and yielded to its spirit of regeneration. During a year it was actuated by the desire of devising and establishing whatever was good and great in a community; but factions, crushed beneath a merciless authority, revived under a government of clemency and forbearance. Two factions, in which were amalgamated, in infinite shades, the friends and enemies of the Revolution, attacked it in turn. It vanquished the first in Germinal and Prairial, the second in Vendémiaire, and to the last day manifested a heroic courage amidst dangers. Finally, it framed a republican constitution, and, after a strife of three years, with Europe, with factions, and with itself, bleeding and mutilated, it abdicated, and transferred France to the Directory.

It has left behind it terrible reminiscences; but for its exculpation it has one — one single fact to allege, and all reproaches sink before that stupendous fact — it saved France from foreign invasion! The preceding assemblies had left France in peril and hazard, it bequeathed France saved and victorious to the Directory and the empire. If the emigration had succeeded in subduing France in 1793, no trace had remained of the labours of the constituent assembly, or of the benefits resulting from the Revolution; instead of those admirable civil institutions — of those magnificent achievements which signalised the constituent, the convention, the Directory, the consulate, and the empire — France would have been a prey to such sanguinary and degrading anarchy as was later deplored beyond the Pyrenees. By repelling the aggression of the kingly conspiracy against the republic, the convention secured to the revolution an uninterrupted action of thirty years on the area of France, and afforded to its works time for consolidation, and for acquiring that force which enables them to defy the impotent wrath of the inveterate foes of humanity. To the men who call themselves with pride "patriots of 1780," the convention will always justly reply, "You had provoked the struggle; it is I who sustained and terminated it."[m]

CHAPTER XIV

THE DIRECTORY: NAPOLEON IN ITALY

[1795–1797 A.D.]

This mingled tale of great national convulsions and pitiless executions — of a total upheaving of new elements, and a total displacement of the old, with heroism, patriotism, and the loftiest aspirations combined with folly and charlatanism of the wildest kind — is now coming to an end. Napoleon Bonaparte is about to lay his hand on the Revolution, and guide it into the path he desires. The history of France condenses itself for the next twenty years into the life of one man, and the same thing may almost be said of the history of the whole of Europe. — WHITE.[b]

IT might have been hoped that the overthrow and punishment of the leading terrorists would produce a return to legality, to order, and to a respect of the representative system. Extreme parties were wearied, decimated, and worn out. The republic was victorious, and had no more to fear from foreign enemies. Now was the moment to establish liberty on a firm basis. The convention, dissolved, would have been replaced by a majority of new men, unstained by the crimes of the Revolution, with the page of experience opened before them, warning them alike of the excesses of royal and of popular tyrants.

But no: the convention, chosen by the nation, dared not trust the nation. Its majority could not hope for re-election; and the past crimes of its members thus forced it to cling to power in self-defence. The republicans made a bugbear of royalism, in order to serve as a pretext for their arbitrary measures; just as royalism makes the same use of republicanism when it has the upper hand. Offering then the pretext of this groundless fear, the old members of the convention perpetuated their power, which thus became a veritable tyranny and dictatorship. It was still more a tyranny, because supported by no party or class whatsoever. The royalists, the moderate, the extreme republicans — all disowned them. The higher classes and the middle classes

they had been obliged to slaughter on the eve of usurpation; and they were very soon assailed by a conspiracy of democrats. Thus deserted by all parties, the majority of the new legislature represented but one interest — that of themselves, the regicides; and had but one aim — their own impunity and continuance in power. It was impossible that their authority, thus baseless, could endure: they leaned for support on the military, which became their janissaries. And the military were obedient, until there arose a general of reputation and ambition, capable of taking the lead, and of representing the military interest. As soon as such a personage appeared, the dictatorial tyranny fell before him, and their usurpation gave way to his. The party of the regicides was superseded by that of the soldiers.

On the 27th of October, 1795, the 500 self-elected conventionalists united themselves, according to their decree, to the 250 newly elected members. These last were for the most part moderate men, distinguished by their information and probity, and strangers to revolutionary excess. Their old colleagues instantly stigmatised them as royalists, ere they opened their mouths. Amongst the married members above forty years of age, a ballot took place; 250 were thus chosen to form the upper chamber, or council of Ancients. The next important step was the choice of the five members of the executive Directory. In this, too, the conventionalists had provided for the maintenance of their system and influence: being the majority, they had entered into a private compact to nominate none save those who had voted the death of Louis XVI, the shibboleth of their party. Accordingly, the choice fell upon Barras, Rewbell, Larévellère-Lépeaux, Letourneur, and Sieyès. The last, either from dislike to his colleagues, or in pique that his plan of government had not been adopted, refused the office; and Carnot was chosen in his stead. The newly elected deputies proposed Cambacérès, who had voted for the imprisonment, not the death, of Louis; but the majority did not consider him sufficiently staunch.

It required an inordinate measure of either courage or ambition to accept the office of government at such a moment. The legislature, and of course its executive, could reckon on the support of no party. The discomfited citizens were indignant; the patriots not reconciled. The five directors, in repairing to the palace of the Luxembourg, which had been assigned them, "found there not a single article of furniture. The porters lent them a rickety table, a sheet of paper, and an ink-bottle, to enable them to despatch the first message announcing their accession. There was not a sou in the treasury. Each night were printed the assignats requisite for the service of the morrow; and they were issued whilst yet moist from the presses of the republic. The greatest uncertainty prevailed as to the provisioning of the capital; and for some days the people had received but a few ounces of bread and some rice each."[c]

FINANCIAL CONDITION OF FRANCE

The financial situation was frightful. Twenty-nine billions of assignats had been issued of which ten had been retired, and nineteen remained in circulation, although on account of the great number of counterfeits it was impossible to know the exact figure. The assignats lost in value from a hundred to a hundred and fifty to one. As a result no more purveyors could be found, officials tendered their resignations, and soldiers deserted, through having no means of living. The postmasters threatened to stop their service. To feed the armies of Paris, the lack of money was supplied by fabricating

assignats in proportion to their needs. The convention, upon the report of the commission of the Five, decided to decree an extraordinary war tax, payable partly in cash, which was equal to twenty times the land tax, and ten times more than the license tax. The Directory demanded the council's authorisation to issue immediately three fresh billions of assignats, equivalent to twenty or thirty millions of écus, and to place the orders for supplies in the neighbouring departments of Paris.

Bankruptcy was inevitable. In reality, it had already taken place, owing to the enormous depreciation of paper. It had even been declared implicitly, the day whereon the convention had reduced the value of the assignats to about a fifth, by submitting them to a variable scale in proportion to the dates of the issue. Only they were always buoyed up by the illusion that the paper would rise again, and that they could liquidate it under less unfavourable conditions. They had therefore sought to find employment for it with which some advantage was connected.

These illusions were no longer possible. The inability of selling the national property was proved. There was too large a quantity of it. The buyers were scarce, and stigmatised by public opinion. Confiscations became more odious, as they multiplied, and the calculations of Cambon less and less practicable. It was, then, only a question of knowing if bankruptcy were definitely decreed, or still put off in the hope attenuating it.

It was also a question of giving up the issue of assignats, which, moreover, brought in almost nothing. The hard cash which the Terror had caused to disappear, would reappear when liberty was restored to individual transactions, when the last traces of the unnatural currency were suppressed, and the state began once more to pay in silver.[d]

SOCIAL MANNERS UNDER THE DIRECTORY

The moral tone of France seemed to be ruined. This was, says the duchess d'Abrantès,[e] according to many men of worth, the period of a real republic; but it was also, according to others, the most deplorable epoch, calculated to excite the utmost compassion for poor France fallen into so abject a condition after the violent paroxysms which had brought her within a step of ruin.

And, strangely, while affairs were taking this turn, the arts were growing popular and science seemed to be on the highroad towards perfection. The republican mania had not limited itself to a desire for a republic. The partisans of this state of things, seeing such a Utopia to be incapable of realisation, stopped at insisting upon the revival of the patriotic gods and of civic functions. They dined in the open, which is annoying when windy, and in the street, which at all times is dirty. But as all dined together in Sparta, it was essential that all should dine together in Paris; with some rejoicings at evading the Spartan broth. The streets were overrun with young men in real *sansculottes* and a little tunic, a cloak, or perhaps an ample toga. Artists and authors spoke and dreamed only of things republican. Men were to be seen dressed in Grecian style and gravely promenading in their white togas trimmed with red, and, halting by one of the Louvre gates, they would there discourse on important state affairs. They never laughed, rested the chin in the hand, saluted with a shake of the head, in short, strove their utmost to play the Roman; even the young men did this to the best of their power. It must not be thought that these were but two or three of the hot-headed and young; there were at least three hundred of them.[f]

TYRANNIES OF THE DIRECTORY

Formed of regicides, and supported by a self-created majority of the same party, the hatred and persecution, not only of royalism but even of moderate republicanism, was in fact imposed on the Directory. A law passed immediately previous to its election, not only banishing the wives of the émigrés, but excluding even their relatives from all functions. It also excluded those who had favoured the insurrection of the sections, or who had shared in the similar reaction which had taken place in the south.

It was in enforcing their unjust laws that the Directory and the conventionalists first found their measures opposed by the little knot of the newly elected deputies. These men, stigmatised as royalists, and certainly beginning to despair of seeing liberty established in France under a republic, represented the wisdom, the moderate and just wishes of the nation. Their names, Thibaudeau, Dupont de Nemours, Barbé Marbois, Matthew Dumas, Le Brun, Portalis, Boissy d'Anglas, Lanjuinais, became all more or less celebrated. We have the testimony of Thibaudeau[g] — whose every page wears the character of honesty and veracity — that the members most suspected of royalism, Boissy himself, were, on the contrary, true to the established system, and that the outcry of the conventionalists was but a pretext. These last, to mark their suspicions, and cast obloquy on their new antagonists, proposed and decreed a kind of legislative *fête* in honour of the 21st of January, the anniversary of the death of Louis. The members were obliged to swear hatred to royalty. Dupont, as he repeated this, added "hatred to all kinds of tyranny," an allusion that the conventionalist majority took immediately to themselves, and forced Dupont to unsay it. The Directory itself showed more generosity than the party from which it sprang. It contained two weak men — Larévellière-Lépeaux, a Girondist, and a dreamer; and Letourneur, a cipher. Barras took the lead, especially in domestic affairs. He was a Dantonist: a profligate republican, and, as such, averse to Carnot, who was a puritanical patriot, and one of Robespierre's terrorist committee.

Barras, however, from his birth and superior knowledge of life, necessarily held the directorial court, and thus assumed the chief influence. He had served in India, where he had learned to love magnificence; and, under his direction, the Luxembourg soon presented the appearance of a palace, by the richness of its decorations, crowds of suitors in the day, and gay assemblies of both sexes at night.

Barras re-established the old machinery of despotism — a minister of police, with the usual concomitants. By these means he hoped to discover the machinations of the different parties, and anticipate their explosion by acts of vigour; and he succeeded. To this he added what was called a constitutional guard, being a faithful corps of troops at the immediate service of the Directory. Thus, under the specious outside of liberty, not only tyranny, but those secondary props and pillars which support it, were carefully set up by the government.

Despite its hatred and hostility to royalists and moderates, the Directory was nevertheless first assailed by a democrat conspiracy. Gracchus Babœuf declared that the Revolution wanted yet one thing to its perfection, *viz.*, an agrarian law. All the anarchists rallied to the utterings of such flattering doctrines — Drouet, Santerre, Rossignol, and the surviving herd of the lower revolutionists. The directors closed the club of the Panthéon. But this merely inspired the members to form a more secret and organised plan,

tending to the great purpose of insurrection. Barras, however, ferreted them, by agents of his new police, through all their holes and conciliabules; and as their project grew ripe, he enveloped and took the greater number in one net.

The trial of Babœuf lasted for a long time, and was remarkable for the insolence and mad audacity of the accused. Gracchus Babœuf and one of his brother scribblers were condemned to death, a judgment which they endeavoured to anticipate by suicide. Six or seven were transported, the rest acquitted.

But we must now quit the struggle of parties, to paint the rising fortunes of the warrior who was destined to swallow them up. The history of France becomes for a long and glorious period identified with the life of Napoleon Bonaparte.[c]

THE ORIGIN AND RISE OF NAPOLEON

Napoleon Bonaparte, born at Ajaccio on the 15th of August, 1769,[1] was the son of Carlo Bonaparte whose family came from Italy, and of Lætitia Ramolino. The Bonapartes of Pérouse became extinct in 1397; those of San Miniato at the end of the sixteenth century. We also come across some at Florence. The Corsican branch originally resided at Sarzana in the territory of Genoa, and in 1610 passed into Corsica where it remained in obscurity until Napoleon appeared. Napoleon gave a lively account of the genealogies made for him after his coronation and of the importunities of an old relative, an abbot of San Miniato, on the subject of one Father Bonaventura Bonaparte, a capuchin of Bologna and long since beatified, but for whom it had been impossible to obtain canonisation owing to the enormous expense which that would have required. "The pope will not refuse it to you," said the good abbot, "if you ask him; and if it has to be paid for, that will now be but a trifle to you." Napoleon signed himself Buonaparte[2] until the day on which he assumed command of the army of Italy. His father, a judge at Ajaccio and a deputy for the Corsican nobility in 1779, died in 1785; his mother died at Rome in 1839. They had eight children; Napoleon was the second. The five sons were Joseph, Napoleon, Lucien, Louis, Jerome, the three daughters, Elisa, Pauline, Caroline. Admitted to the military school at Brienne in 1779, he passed five years later to the military school of Paris, on the recommendation of his professors, one of whom, the history master, had made this remark concerning him: "He will go far if circumstances favour him." The following year he obtained the rank of lieutenant in the artillery regiment of La Fère. His first garrison was Grenoble, then Valence. He at first showed himself to be a strong partisan of the Revolution, and when, in 1793, Paoli would have given Corsica to the

[1 The accepted opinion is that Napoleon was born at Ajaccio on August 15th, 1769. This opinion rests indeed on the positive statement of Joseph Bonaparte, but it is certain from documents that on January 7th, 1768, Madame Lætitia bore a son at Corte, who was baptised by the name of Nabulione. And even in legal documents we find contradictory statements about the time and place of birth, not only of Napoleon, but also of Joseph. All difficulties disappear at once if we suppose that Napoleon and Nabulione were one and the same, and that Joseph was really the second son, whom the parents found it convenient to pass off as the first-born. This they may have found convenient when, in 1779, they gained admission for a son to the military school of Brienne. A son born in 1768 would at that date be inadmissible, as being above ten years of age. Thus it is conceivable that Napoleon was introduced by a fraud to that military career which changed the face of the world. Nevertheless it is certain from Lucien's memoir that of such a fraud nothing was known to the younger members of the family, who regarded Joseph as without doubt the eldest. — SEELEY.*h*]

[2 The spelling "Bonaparte" also occurs in early Italian forms of the name.]

English, young Bonaparte went with the expedition directed against this old friend of his family. It was not successful; he and his were obliged to fly, and took refuge at Marseilles where his mother and sisters lived in very straitened circumstances.[1]

When the army of the convention attacked Toulon, which had been surrendered to the Anglo-Spanish fleet, the people's representatives made him the commander of a battalion and charged him with the direction of the siege artillery. His general, Cartaux, very brave but very incapable, required nothing of him save to make a breach through which he might pass with his grenadiers. Bonaparte maintained that it was not with the town that they had to concern themselves but with the ships; that to threaten to cut off the latter from their retreat would force them to fly. He showed the general and the representatives a point at the southern extremity of the roadstead from whence it would be possible to bombard the fleet. "It is there that Toulon stands," he said. Dugommier had superseded Cartaux. He understood Bonaparte's plan and approved it. The fort of Éguillette was carried and the English hastened to abandon Toulon, which they had been unable to save and which they set on fire. Bonaparte, appointed brigadier-general as a reward, went to command the artillery of the army of Italy. The day of the 9th Thermidor arrested his fortune.[2] He was placed on the inactive list; the revolt of the section on the 13th Vendémiaire removed him from it, as we have seen, with éclat. Carnot gave him command of the army of the Alps with which Schérer, or rather Masséna, had gained the glorious but barren victory of Loano (23rd and 24th of November, 1795). He was then only twenty-seven.[i]

JOSEPHINE, FIRST WIFE OF NAPOLEON I
(1763–1814)

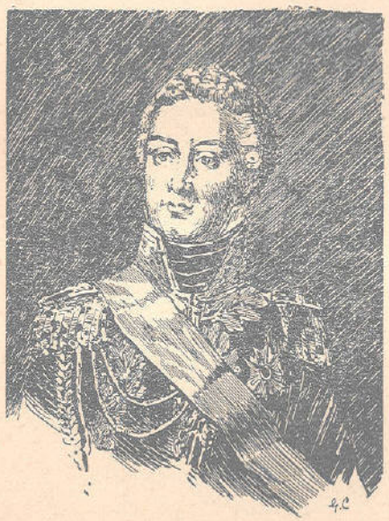
His marriage (March 9th, 1796) with the widow of General Beauharnais, happening simultaneously with the appointment, gives some foundation to the rumour that the interests of her friends, combined with his own, procured for him the command of an army of activity. Josephine, much older than Napoleon, was a

[1 The European war was just breaking out, and at Paris everything was in confusion; otherwise he would probably have been tried by court-martial and shot. A rebel in Corsica, a deserter in France, what was he to do? He went to Paris. The government, attacked by all Europe, could not dispense with the few officers whom the emigration had left. On August 30th, 1792, his name was restored to the army list, with the rank of captain, a commission dated back to the 6th of February, and arrears of pay. He was saved from the most desperate condition to which he was ever in his whole life reduced.*h*]

[2 Probably the connection of Bonaparte with the Robespierres was closer than Bonaparte himself at a later time liked to have it thought.*h*]

creole, of engaging person, and seems to have inspired him with a sincere passion.

In the commencement of the war the Netherlands principally had attracted the attention of the forces of the French. These conquered, and being secure from hostilities on the lower Rhine by reason of peace with Prussia, and on the side of the Pyrenees by that with Spain, they bent their efforts first to the invasion of Germany by the upper Rhine. The campaign of 1795 had in this quarter not been attended with success; whilst on the Mediterranean a partial victory, in which the counsels of Bonaparte had no small share, had shown Austria to be far more vulnerable in that quarter. Whilst Moreau, a cautious rather than an active general, was sent to replace Pichegru on the Rhine, Bonaparte was despatched to the Alps, to realise and execute the projects of conquest which he had first suggested.[c]



ALEXANDER BERTHIER
(1753–1815)

The fourth year of the Revolutionary War was opening. The peculiar characteristic of that war is that, having been for France, at the commencement, a national war of liberation on the grandest scale, it changed its character and became an equally unprecedented national war of conquest.[h]

Political were joined with strategic motives. In Italy, the French were opposed by an alliance betwixt Austria and Piedmont, which it might be possible to break. True it was, the king of the latter country had cause of inveterate enmity against France, which had robbed him of Savoy, a large and important part of his dominions. But "could we defeat the Austrians," argued the statesmen of the Directory, "we might recompense the king of Sardinia by giving him the Milanese in lieu of Savoy." According to this plan, Bonaparte was recommended to penetrate into the Milanese, if possible separate the allies, and exert his utmost efforts against the Austrians. These political views harmonised completely with his military plans, which were, not to brave and carry the obvious passes of the Italian Alps, blocked by fortresses and defended by well-known positions, but, in the language of war, to turn them.[c]

BONAPARTE'S CAMPAIGN IN ITALY (1796–1797 A.D.)

Carnot's plan for the campaign of 1796 was bold and scientific. Jourdan and Moreau, two generals already celebrated, each of them having with him from 70,000 to 80,000 men, were to penetrate into Germany, the first by the valley of the Main, the second by that of the Neckar, with the object of reaching the basin of the Danube and descending thence on the hereditary states which Bonaparte's 38,000 men would menace by way of Italy. Thus Moreau in the centre and Jourdan and Bonaparte on the two wings, were about to effect a movement in advance, feed the French armies from the

hostile countries, and converge if possible on the road to Vienna. But the three armies were divided; Bonaparte from Moreau by the mass of the Italian Alps; Moreau from Jourdan by the Alps of Franconia. This plan, excellent if successful, might have troublesome consequences in case of reverse.

When Bonaparte joined the army of the Alps the generals Masséna, Augereau, Serrurier, Laharpe, Berthier, already rendered illustrious by important services, received the new-comer with a bad grace. He assembled them together, unfolded his plans; and, on leaving the council, Masséna said to Augereau: "We have found our master." On the soldiers Bonaparte sprung one of those magnificent proclamations which electrified men's minds:

"SOLDIERS:
"You are ill-fed and almost naked; the government owes you much, but can do nothing for you; your patience and courage do you honour but procure you neither glory nor advantage. I shall now lead you into one of the most fertile plains in the world; there you will find great cities and rich provinces; there you will find honour, glory, and riches. Soldiers of Italy, would you be found lacking in courage?"

The army was in cantonments on the southern slope of the Alps and Apennines, where during four years it had been painfully struggling against the Sardinian and Austrian troops. The first were at Ceva; the second were established more to the east on either side of the Apennines, in the valley of the Bormida and the river of Genoa, towards Voltri. Beaulieu was in command of them and spoke of making short work. He would not take off his boots, he said to the king of Sardinia, till he was at Lyons. Bonaparte had 38,000 men against 60,000. Nevertheless he resolved to take the offensive, and did so boldly, that he might gain the more thereby. Instead of wearing out his forces amid barren rocks where no great blows could be struck, he repeated and improved on the manœuvre which had led to the fall of the camp of Saorge in 1794, and which, followed by Masséna in 1795, had also won for Schérer the victory of Loano. He turned the Alps in order to cross the mountains at the lowest point of the chain towards the sources of the Bormida at the defile of Montenotte whilst Beaulieu waited for him on the sea shore by Voltri, and by this skilful movement he placed himself in a position fronting the weakest point of Austrian Piedmont.[i]

BATTLE OF MONTENOTTE AND CONQUEST OF PIEDMONT (1796 A.D.)

Now Beaulieu divided his force, attacked the column in front to check its progress, and compress it, whilst he assailed it from the gorge of the Alps to take it in flank and cut it. Betwixt the Austrian divisions of the left and centre, destined to execute both these projects, there was none but a circuitous communication; the mountains lay between them: and the French general was thus enabled, by amusing and keeping the show of fighting one, to unite sufficient numbers to crush the other.[1] He instantly aimed at the centre, and abandoned all idea of marching further to Genoa.

The Alps, at that early season still covered with snow, offered few gorges where it was possible to pass them: on this Bonaparte had calculated in his adventurous march. That of Montenotte was one of these passes; but as yet uncertain of the dispositions of Beaulieu, and whether it might not behove him to continue his march towards Genoa and the pass of the Bochetta,

[1 This, the first of Bonaparte's campaigns, has been compared to his last, as in 1815 he tried to separate Blücher and Wellington, hoping to overcome them in turn, so now with more success he attacked first the Austrians under Beaulieu, and then the Sardinians under Colli.[h]]

the French general had occupied it by a detachment of nearly 1,200 men. Argenteau, according to the orders of Beaulieu, led the Austrian centre, about 18,000 strong, to Montenotte on the 11th of April. A small body first arrived, before which Rampon retreated to a redoubt, and against which he defended it with desperate bravery. Aware, by a quick instinct, that the safety of the whole army depended on his preventing the Austrians from pursuing down the Alps simultaneously with Beaulieu's front attack, and before the French were prepared, Rampon made his men swear to perish rather than yield the redoubt. They succeeded in keeping possession of it till the night, when Bonaparte made dispositions for transporting his whole army from the shore to the summit of the Alps, leaving Beaulieu with merely the shadow of an antagonist, whilst he totally crushed Argenteau and the centre. The night of the 11th and the morning of the 12th were rainy; mists covered the hills; and Argenteau was not a little surprised to see a strong division issue from them to attack him. The combat was sharp: the Austrians imagined that Rampon with some reinforcement was their only antagonist; but as the mist cleared, the whole French army appeared around: Masséna advancing almost in their rear, and Bonaparte himself on a lofty summit directing the motions of his troops. There was no hope but in flight, which the attack soon rendered disorderly and murderous: the Austrian centre, broken and routed, abandoned its cannon and a number of prisoners, and fled to Dego.

PIERRE FRANÇOIS CHARLES AUGEREAU
(1757–1816)

Such a partial victory was important far less in itself than in its consequences, and these were to be snatched by an active hand. The Austrian centre, rallied at Dego, was to be annihilated, and its position occupied, ere Beaulieu could arrive to its aid; whilst the Sardinians under Colli, already advanced to Millesimo, were at the same time to be repulsed, and thus a complete disjunction effected betwixt the allied enemies. The very day of the victory of Montenotte, Bonaparte pushed on to the pursuit. Dividing his army into two, the greater portion, under Augereau, attacked the Sardinians at Millesimo on the 13th; whilst Masséna approached Dego, and prepared to carry it on the morrow. At Millesimo the Sardinians were driven in at the first onset; but Provera, commanding a body of Austrians destined to be the link betwixt Colli and Argenteau, made a stubborn resistance, and at length took possession of an old castle called Cosseria, on the top of a hill, whence it was found impossible to force him. The assault was attempted, but in vain; Provera killed almost as many French in defending Cosseria as the latter had killed of Austrians at Montenotte: but his valour could not repair the original error of Beaulieu.

The Sardinians, making every effort on the 14th, could not disengage Provera, who was without provisions, and surrendered at length on observing Colli obliged to retreat. On the same day the position of Argenteau at

Dego, defended by the beaten troops of Montenotte, was forced, and the town taken possession of by the French. Beaulieu had not yet time to appear, when a stray body of Austrians, 6,000 strong, returning from vain attempts at impracticable and now useless movements, stumbled upon Dego, forced the French posts, and drove them out. This was disheartening to an army which had fought incessantly for three days, and was now reposing after a second victory: the greater part, indeed, were slumbering, overpowered with fatigue and wine. Masséna and Laharpe, however, succeeded in rallying a certain number to resist this new enemy; but it was not without effort and loss equal to those made in the first attacks, that the re-conquest was achieved.

These victories of a week had effected the separation of the Austrian and Sardinian armies, had cost them 10,000 men and 40 pieces of cannon, and had opened all Italy to the French, by giving them the possession of the Alps and Apennines. Bonaparte now marched to crush the Sardinian army altogether, and menace Turin, in order, according to the plans of the Directory, to force that court to abandon the alliance of Austria. Turning to the left then, and leaving Beaulieu behind, the French pursued Colli to his entrenched camp at Ceva, which the latter, not thinking tenable, abandoned, and retired to Mondovi. Colli still held firm, in expectation that Beaulieu would exert himself, hurry to his aid, and make some attempt to repair their mutual disasters. But the Austrian already trembled for Milan; and, abandoning his ally, was meditating to provide for the safety of the latter town, not of Turin. Colli was, in fact, left to shift for himself in Piedmont, as the duke of York had been in Flanders. Nevertheless, the Sardinian general did all that a brave man and a skilful general might: vanquished at Mondovi, he made a gallant retreat. Nevertheless it behoved the king of Sardinia to make peace with the conqueror, whom he was unable longer to resist. Bonaparte required the surrender of all the important fortresses of the kingdom; Turin, and one or two others, alone excepted. Thus the passes of the Alps were opened to the French. Free passage was at the same time to be allowed their troops across Piedmont. In short, the monarch and his little realm, merely allowed to exist, were completely at the mercy of the conquerors. Ere the end of April all this had been effected. Said Bonaparte, in a simple proclamation, where facts spoke sufficiently the language of triumph:

"SOLDIERS:

"In fifteen days you have won 6 victories, taken 21 stand of colours, 55 pieces of cannon, the greater part of the fortresses and territory of Piedmont. You have made 15,000 prisoners, slain or wounded upwards of 10,000 men, and have raised yourselves to an equality with the armies of either Holland or the Rhine." After continuing in the same strain, he thus terminates: "There are yet some of you, it is said, whose ardour flags, and who propose returning to the summits of the Apennines and Alps. No, I cannot believe this. The conquerors of Montenotte, of Millesimo, of Dego and Mondovi, burn to carry yet further the glory of the French people!"

The plans of Bonaparte, instead of turning back to the Alps, which he had passed, had already far outshot even Milan. The day on which the armistice was signed, he wrote to the Directory: "I shall chase Beaulieu over the Po, follow him, and occupy Lombardy; before a month I hope to be on the mountains of the Tyrol, to communicate with the army of the Rhine, and, in concert with it, carry the war into Bavaria." The Directory in return, or rather Carnot, its war organ, applauded the zeal of the young general, directing him to drive the Austrians into the Tyrol; and then, in

[1796 A.D.]

lieu of following them, to divide the army, leave half in Lombardy under Kellermann, and march with the rest southward against Rome and Naples.[1] The letter, at the same time, reminded Bonaparte that he was to consult the commission of the Directory on all important occasions. This latter hint, as well as the proposal of dividing the army, stirred the temper of the young general. He replied sharply that nothing great or decisive could be effected except by one commander, and by him, moreover, uncontrolled. "Break the unity of military thought, and you lose Italy. Kellermann is a more experienced and a better officer than I. But together we could do nought but blunder."

INVASION OF THE MILANESE: THE BRIDGE OF LODI

In the meantime Bonaparte, having achieved the conquest of Piedmont, now entered upon that of the Milanese.[2] The army of Beaulieu, though diminished by defeat, was still of force capable to defend a country bounded and intersected by so many rivers. Immediately betwixt the French and Milan ran both the Ticino and the Po. Bonaparte, in his negotiations with the court of Turin, had insisted on having Valenza, on which was a bridge over the Po. He had done so in order to deceive Beaulieu into the belief that he intended to pass there.

The Austrian was caught in the snare; posted his army at the confluence of the two rivers, and prepared to dispute the passage. Instead, however, of their crossing both streams in following a straight line upon Milan, a circuit on the right bank of the Po would bring the French to Piacenza, farther down the stream than where the Ticino meets it. By crossing there, in lieu of Valenza, the latter stream was altogether avoided, and Beaulieu's retreat threatened to be cut off. Bonaparte, to effect this, undertook a forced march of thirty-six hours to Piacenza, which he reached on the 7th of May. With the aid of what boats he could seize, a bridge was thrown over the Po, and the army passed on the 9th. It did not hesitate to attack the nearest Austrian division, which was routed, and fled to Pizzighettone on the Adda. No river or line of defence now intervened betwixt the French and Milan. Beaulieu, anticipated and foiled in his project of defending the bridge of Valenza on the Po, hurried to a place himself behind the Adda, the next river eastward of Milan. The French general instantly resolved to force this line of defence ere the Austrians had time to strengthen it. Until this was achieved he deferred taking possession of

[1] Some of the advice contained in this letter of Carnot is not a little characteristic: "Let the republican troops remain in the Milanese and levy contributions. You will arrive there just in harvest. Manage so that the army of Italy will not need to draw anything from home." And again, "If the pope should make offers of peace, demand first of all that he put up public prayers for the prosperity and success of the French Republic. Some of his fine monuments, his statues, pictures, medals, books, his silver madonnas, and even his church bells, may defray the expenses of our visit." Thus we see that two kinds of spoliation attributed to Bonaparte originated in the orders of the Directory.

[2 Upon receipt of the intelligence of that campaign of fifteen days, of that rapid succession of victories, followed by so advantageous a treaty, France was astonished; Italy, degraded by alien masters and filled with an ardent desire for independence, was profoundly agitated; and all those decrepit sovereignties that had joined the coalition trembled, whilst preparing for resistance. It was a dangerous enterprise to advance with thirty thousand men into a country regarded as the sepulchre of the French, leaving Piedmont and Genoa in a state of doubtful neutrality in the rear, and faced by the Austrian power, flanked by Rome and Naples, full of fanatical hatred against "the atheists and robbers of France." But none of these states possessed troops; allies might be found amongst the people, a victory over the Austrians would cancel hostilities. Bonaparte resumed his march by way of Alessandria. — LAVALLÉE.]

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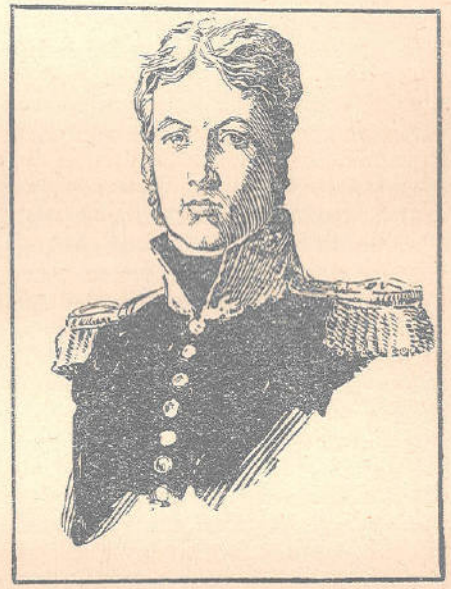
Milan. Pizzighettone, the nearest town that contained a bridge over the Adda, was too well garrisoned and defended. Bonaparte pressed on to the next bridge, tracing upwards the course of the river. This was at Lodi.

Beaulieu had made good his retreat thus far. Half of his army, however, he had been obliged to send by a circuitous direction, in order to throw a garrison into the castle of Milan. This half the French general hoped to intercept, if he could succeed in routing the remainder, about 12,000 men, which Beaulieu kept with himself at Lodi. To drive the advanced guard of this body from Lodi and beyond the Adda was an easy task. But to dispossess them of the bridge was an attempt so rash that the Austrians considered it impossible. Otherwise they would have destroyed the bridge, or at least an arch of it. But it was now too late for this, as the French cannon were instantly ordered to play upon it. Beaulieu, on his side of the bridge, raked it with thirty cannon. On either side the shower of grape-shot was dreadful; but the French were covered by the walls and houses of Lodi, whilst the Austrians were exposed. Their general, in consequence, drew them out of reach of shot; thus trusting the defence of the bridge to the formidable battery alone.



JEAN VICTOR MOREAU
(1761-1813)

Seeing this, Bonaparte formed his stoutest grenadiers in column, and prepared to cross, whilst the cavalry menaced to pass by a ford at no great distance. At a word the column rushed on the bridge. Its front was shattered, almost ere it was formed, by the shower of shot. It even hesitated, till the generals placed themselves at its head, and cheered it on; whilst the light troops, dropping down the wooden buttresses of the bridge, passed underneath to distract the enemy. The first fire of the battery was the chief obstacle; that withstood, the French rushed on the Austrian guns, and bayoneted the cannoneers. The cavalry followed, and had time to form and charge ere the main line of the tardy Austrians could come up. These withstood the assault for but a few minutes. They gave way and fled, leaving behind their artillery, colours, and some thousand prisoners. Thus was completed the rout of Beaulieu, the shattered remains of whose army retired towards the Tyrol and the provinces of Venice.

The victory of Lodi was won on the 10th of May. On the 15th, Bonaparte made his triumphant entry into Milan, where a large portion of republicans and personal admirers welcomed the hero. Uncertain, however, as to the political fate of the country, and already less a Jacobin from the eminence he had obtained, he kept a prudent reserve, not showing the same haste to revolutionise that he had shown to conquer.[c]

He had already granted an armistice to the duke of Parma on payment of two millions, as well as horses, grain, and twenty pictures for the museum of the Louvre in Paris. He concluded a similar treaty with the duke of

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Modena; he levied twenty millions upon Lombardy, sending ten to the Directory and one to Moreau, to enable him to take the field. It was quite a new departure for a general to support not only his army but his government: moreover the ministers were beginning to feel alarm at this young man who governed conquered provinces according to his own liking; who signed treaties with nations and princes, leaving the throne to one, promising independence to another, and who, in fact, displayed the most extraordinary talent for leading men. An attempt was made to balk him in his plan of campaign; he sent in his resignation. The government dared not accept it. From that time dates his influence over the government, as over the army; he was master of the operations of war and of peace; the people and the soldiers already treated him as a leader.*j*

Seven or eight days appeared to Bonaparte a sufficient period of repose for himself and his army after their fatigues and combats. Milan, too, where money, good cheer, and admiration awaited them, might prove enervating to their valour. On the 24th, therefore, he resumed his march eastward, and reached Lodi, when tidings of a general revolt, which had awaited but the signal of his departure, reached him. He instantly hurried back to Milan; there the insurrection had been put down. At Pavia, on the contrary, it had been successful. With not more than 1,000 men, the general marched against a city of 30,000 inhabitants, where, moreover, the insurgents had got possession of the citadel, and disarmed the French garrison. With the artillery, his sovereign arm against the populace, Bonaparte battered down the gates, entered, and swept the streets with grape-shot, rendering himself master of Pavia. He rewarded his successful band by several hours of pillage, which the soldiers effectually employed, principally in the goldsmiths' shops and the great pawnbroking establishment. The officers left in command of the garrison, who had delivered the citadel, he condemned to be shot; and thus having done summary justice by the insurrection, the general rejoined his army.

He now entered the Venetian states, little respecting the neutrality of that government. As the Austrians had traversed them, Bonaparte resolved to take the same liberty, without, however, if possible, exciting the enmity of Venice, which he by turns menaced and cajoled.[1] Beaulieu, reinforced, had retired behind the Mincio, a river which runs from the Lake of Garda to Mantua, and determined to defend its passage. He had taken possession of Peschiera, a fortress on the river, where it issues from the lake, despite the Venetians, and posting his troops along the stream, his centre at Borghetto, he awaited the French. But the confidence of the Austrians was gone; the hardiest enterprise was no longer rash, when undertaken by the French against them. After some manœuvring, Bonaparte, on the 30th of May, attacked Borghetto, where there was a bridge over the Mincio. Beaulieu took care to destroy an arch; but, in despite of this, the French crossed chin deep in the river, beat their enemies on the opposite side, and re-established the bridge.

The Austrians now retired into the gorges of the Tyrol, Mantua being the only town of Italy where the imperial eagle still floated. It was an almost impregnable place, completely surrounded by a marsh or lake, traversable merely by raised roads or causeways. Famine, however, might

[1 The Venetian aristocracy, decrepit but still wealthy, and able to command 12,000 men and 20 vessels, did not like Austria, who surrounded it on all sides, but the French it held in detestation on account of its Revolution; it assumed an attitude of disarmed neutrality that brought about its ruin, and found itself at the mercy now of the Austrians, now of the French.*j*]

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reduce it, and Bonaparte formed the siege. To take up a position, so as to protect this siege, was the next important point; for the Austrians merely waited for reinforcements to re-issue from the Tyrol, and again strike a blow for Lombardy. The Adige formed the best line of defence, being deep, rapid, and of short course. Verona and Legnago were its keys and bridges. Venice was most reluctant to yield them; but by half menace, half cajolery, Bonaparte obtained possession, and garrisoned them.

Thus, in the commencement of June, was the third act of the military drama of 1796 completed. He first annihilated Piedmont, and next he grasped the Milanese. In that just concluded, he set foot upon the Adige, and bade defiance to the last efforts of Austria. Pausing there, Bonaparte, forbidden by the Directory to engage his army in the Tyrol, marched with a strong division across the Po, to terrify southern Italy into submission.*c*

In spite of so much success, the situation of the French was becoming complicated with a multitude of obstacles; besides Piedmont and the state of Genoa, where bands of brigands were massacring their isolated soldiery, besides Parma and Modena, whose ill will was undoubted, they had the English at their backs, masters of Leghorn and Corsica: upon their right flank Rome and Naples, who were arming; in their midst Venice in a state of wrath, for it had been forced to feed the French troops, three of its strongholds were occupied, and ideas of independence were being propagated in its towns; finally, 50,000 Austrians, detached from the armies of the Rhine, were on the march with the aged Wurmser, to gather together the remains of Beaulieu's army, raise the siege of Mantua, and reconquer Italy. It was necessary to check actively all the movements and hostile intentions. Bonaparte left 15,000 men before Mantua, 20,000 upon the Adige, and with seven or eight thousand marched upon the peninsula to force Naples into quiescence, ransom the pope, and drive the English from Leghorn. The Neapolitan court hastened to surrender, withdrew its troops from the coalition, and closed its ports to the English. Genoa, when threatened, gave all the required sureties (June 5th). Bonaparte traversed Reggio, Modena, and Bologna, enlightened and energetic towns, anxious for liberty, which received him with enthusiasm. Ferrara yielded without resistance. Pope Pius VI, a good but weak prelate, who had expressed himself with vehemence upon the subject of the Revolution, was terrified; he requested an armistice (June 2nd), and was astonished at receiving it with tokens of respect, but in consideration of the surrender of the legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and the citadel of Ancona, a contribution of twenty-one millions, one hundred pictures, and five hundred manuscripts. Bonaparte then sent off a division to Tuscany, which entered Leghorn, garrisoned it, and distributed arms and ammunition in Corsica, by which means the inhabitants of that island were enabled to drive out the English. Lastly, after having forced Piedmont by threats into a state of peace, he returned to Mantua.*j*

While all these glorious feats had been achieved with an army of 38,000 men, Moreau and Jourdan, on the Rhine, had 126,000 at their disposal; and the Austrians, under the archduke Charles, 110,000. Moreau was an able general; but he had not reached that grand unity of plan which inspired Bonaparte. He was also under the control of Carnot, an able minister, but one who pedantically endeavoured to regulate from his cabinet the march of armies in the field. In war, as in medicine and other arts, there is always some new nostrum considered sovereign for the time. Carnot's maxim was to turn and force the wings of an enemy's army; which to do more effectually on the Rhine, he divided the French force, giving one-half to Moreau, the other to

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Jourdan, keeping them far apart. It was committing the same blunder, though on a much larger scale, as that which had proved fatal to Beaulieu. The archduke Charles, however, failed to take any advantage of the separation of his foes, until necessity inspired him with boldness and invention.

In June, the Austrian court drafted 30,000 men from the army of the Rhine, under Wurmser, in order to rally the relics of Beaulieu's troops, and defend, or rather regain, Italy. Weakened by this, the archduke thought fit to retreat. An advantage won by Moreau, who followed and pressed him, precipitated his retreat to the Danube. Here, however, in the strong defiles that guard the dominions of Austria, the archduke made a stand, and, not imitating, but rivalling, the new tactics of Bonaparte, he concentrated his force, bore it rapidly upon Jourdan, whom he thus overwhelmed and defeated. Moreau, deprived of the support of his colleague, was obliged to retreat on his side through the Black Forest; a manœuvre which he effected with such skill, firmness, and trifling loss, as to earn fame equal to that which a victory would have given. To the archduke Charles truly belonged the glory of the campaign in Germany.[c]

The young archduke was indebted to the absurdity of the French plan for a brilliant conception, which he realised with prudence; but, like Moreau, he lacked that ardour, that audacity if you will, which might have rendered the blunder of the French government fatal to its armies. Conceive what would have happened if on either side had been engaged the impetuous genius which had annihilated three armies beyond the Alps! If the 70,000 men of Moreau, at the moment they debouched from Kehl, or if the imperials, at the moment they quitted the Danube to wheel on Jourdan, had been conducted with the vigour and promptitude exhibited in the Italian campaign, assuredly the war would have been terminated most disastrously for one of the two powers.

The campaign endowed the young archduke with a resplendent fame in Europe. In France, a grateful fame was engendered towards Moreau, for having led back in safety the army compromised in Bavaria. The greatest anxiety had been felt respecting that army, especially from the time when, Jourdan being repelled, the bridge of Kehl menaced, and the communications through Swabia intercepted by a multitude of detached corps, nothing was known of its operations or its fate. But when, after an interval of poignant disquietude, it was seen debouching into the valley of the Rhine in so perfect an attitude, men were enchanted with the general who had so auspiciously redeemed it. His retreat was extolled as a masterpiece of art, and straightway compared to that of the Ten Thousand. None ventured, indeed, to oppose it to the brilliant triumphs of the army of Italy; but as there are always many whom superior genius and high fortune mortify, and whom less shining merit rather gratify, all such declared for Moreau, vaunted his consummate prudence and ability, and esteemed it preferable to the electric hardihood of young Bonaparte. From this period, Moreau had for partisans all who prefer secondary to transcendent talents; and, it must be confessed, in a republic we almost pardon enemies of genius, when we see how that genius can become culprit towards the liberty which has quickened, fostered, and raised it to the pinnacle of glory.[d]

BONAPARTE CRUSHES WURMSER

Whilst 150,000 French thus manœuvred to and fro betwixt the Rhine and the Danube to very little purpose, 40,000 under Bonaparte were deciding the fate of Europe. Wurmser rallied the scattered and disheartened bands of

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Beaulieu. His fresh troops, with the relics of the Italian army, formed an army of more than 60,000 men; and with these the Austrians issued from the Tyrol. Wurmser seemed full of confidence; so much so, that whilst he advanced in person southwards down the Adige, occupying both banks to drive the French before him and relieve Mantua, he despatched 20,000 men under Quasdanowitch to march round the Lake of Garda, and cut off the retreat of the French.

General Bonaparte, engaged in pressing the siege of Mantua, was here for the first time caught slumbering on his past good fortune. He was tied, in fact, to the conquest of Mantua, which he could not bring himself to abandon: and hence the Austrians were allowed to burst upon him. His projected line of defence on the Adige was useless; for Wurmser's chief force came down in the pass betwixt it and the lake. Here Masséna was driven from his positions: Quasdanowitch did as much by Guyeux on the other side of the lake. Tidings of both reverses reached Bonaparte on the 30th of July, and shook him for the time. He was not accustomed to defensive warfare; his spirit and genius were only called forth when he attacked. His first impulse was to call a council of war; an unusual act of condescension. All counselled retreat save Augereau;[1] and his appeared but blind ardour. In his meditations of the night, Bonaparte's imagination kindled with a plan of assuming the offensive, and of rapidly attacking each division of the enemy separately. On the morrow all was active. The besieging army was instantly ordered to abandon Mantua, destroy its artillery, and rally with all the scattered corps to the southern extremity of the lake westward of the Mincio.

When this was effected, Bonaparte marched to repulse Quasdanowitch, impending from the western shore of the Lake of Garda. Fortunately Wurmser allowed him time for this operation, by an idle march which he made to provision Mantua. Whilst the Austrian general was thus enjoying the sight of cannon destroyed, and other signs of a siege abandoned, the French were driving back Quasdanowitch, routing one of his corps, and intimidating the rest to inaction and retreat. Bonaparte then hurried back — he scarcely quitted horseback for many days — to face the Austrians advancing from the Adige. They came to join bands with Quasdanowitch, and drove Masséna at first from Lonato. Bonaparte in person arrived from his expedition to support Masséna along the road from Brescia. As he halted in their presence, the Austrians advanced their wings to envelope him, as well as with their right to reach as near as possible to Quasdanowitch. The French general allowed them to extend, till, seizing the moment, he rushed with his whole force upon their centre, broke through it, scattered one half, and intercepted the other, which, pursued with unrelenting activity by Junot, laid down its arms at last. Such was the combat of Lonato, fought on the 3rd of August.

Lonato is a short distance southward of Desenzano, which forms the point of the lake. Still farther south, in a direct line, is Castiglione, where certain heights formed a favourable position of defence. Thither then Bonaparte transferred his quarters to resist Wurmser; who, returning from Mantua, had rallied the divisions beaten at Lonato, and prepared to take his revenge. Both generals spent the 4th in mustering and preparing to try the fortunes

[1 On this occasion we find the young commander's resource and courage failing him. He called councils of war, and declared in favour of retreating across the Po. When Augereau resisted this determination, he left the room declaring that he would have nothing to do with the matter, and, when Augereau asked who was to give orders, answered, "You!" The desperate course was rewarded with success.[A]]

of a battle on the following day at Castiglione. Bonaparte had ridden to Lonato to hasten the march of his rear, when a straggling body of Austrians, beaten on the 3rd, and wandering ever since in search of the main army, presented itself, and commanded the French general to surrender. Bonaparte had but 1,000 men. Assuming a bold countenance, however, he received the officer sent to summon him, in the midst of a numerous staff, and, feigning anger at the demand, replied: "Return, and tell your officer that you have found here the commander-in-chief of the French, who gives him eight minutes to surrender. He is surrounded by our division, and has nothing to hope." The astonished Austrian delivered the message, and corroborated the assertion that Bonaparte himself was there. The commander accordingly abandoned all thoughts of resistance, and, with upwards of three thousand men, surrendered to a body not one-third its number.

On the next day, the 5th, was fought the battle of Castiglione. Bonaparte, to render it decisive, had despatched orders to the corps of Serrurier, which had been engaged in the siege of Mantua, and which in its retreat from thence had not yet joined the main army, to take a circuitous route, so as to reach the left of the Austrians at a certain hour. It was in these calculations of time that Bonaparte excelled. Now the cannon of Serrurier were heard simultaneously with those of the French right wing, which advanced to the attack. The left held back, bringing the line into a semicircular form, which was also assumed by the Austrians as they pressed on. The latter, however, forming the outer circle, tended to spread as they advanced; the French concentrated as they retired. The Austrian line soon became still more weakened on the right by the necessity of drafting some of the detachments to oppose Serrurier's corps. The French suddenly ceased to retire, and began to attack. The Austrian right was driven in, at the same time that their left was thrown into disorder by Serrurier; and Wurmser, narrowly escaping capture himself, was obliged to give orders for retreat.

Thus did the fatuity of the Austrian general, in parcelling out his noble army, deliver it up to be beaten in detail by Bonaparte.[1] Wurmser now saw himself worsted; but he resolved at least to avoid the fate of Beaulieu, and to preserve his force from total discomfiture. He therefore retreated into the Tyrol in as good order as was possible with troops who had lost all confidence, and who began to believe, with some reason, that the French were invincible. Whilst the conquerors reposed for the remainder of August, resuming the siege of Mantua, the court of Vienna reinforced Wurmser, the cabinet acting on the same false plan as its generals, in making petty consecutive and divided efforts, instead of a grand and overwhelming one. In the beginning of September, Wurmser was again about to assume the offensive. Leaving Davidowich in the gorges of the Tyrol, either to defend them or to advance down the Adige, according to the force opposed to him, the Austrian general descended the valley of the Brenta, taking a circuitous route towards Verona and Mantua. If he divided his force this time, it was so widely that Bonaparte would be obliged, he thought, to imitate his example.

The French commander left Wurmser to pursue his distant route, attacked Davidowich, defeated him at Roveredo, and annihilated his division in the defile of Colliano. He then, instead of returning by Verona and the Adige, to face Wurmser, marched straight after him down the Brenta, not only to attack but to cut off from him all retreat. This was hazardous; for Wurmser might in the meantime fling himself on Verona, where there was little to

[1 In this six days' campaign 30,000 men overthrew 60,000 and killed or captured 20,000, with 66 guns and 20 standards.*f*]

oppose him: but Bonaparte depended on his celerity; he hurried on, without provision, without horses, himself sharing the rations of the soldier, and thus reached the rear of Wurmser at Bassano. The Austrian was obliged to recall his troops, and a battle took place which proved the last blow to this new army and general. The latter, cut off from home, fled south to Vicenza, from thence to Legnago, where he forced the passage of the Adige. The French in vain endeavoured to intercept equally his retreat to Mantua. In this they failed, and Wurmser succeeded in throwing himself into that fortress with 15,000 troops, the relics of his army.[1]

POLITICAL CHANGES IN ITALY

To form the siege anew was all that was left to Bonaparte. Had the army of the Rhine been equally victorious, he might have passed the Tyrol to act in concert with it; but Jourdan was then beaten, and Moreau in retreat. The army of Italy was too weak to make such an attempt by itself. A respite, therefore, was allowed to general and soldiers. The former spent it in reorganising the friendly countries of Italy. How these were to be treated, what steps were to be taken, what hopes held forth, was an early and important point of consideration. With respect to Piedmont, we have seen that the love of propagating and extending revolution had been sacrificed to expediency. Milan demanded equal reserve; it being yet uncertain whether it was to be ceded back to Austria, or given to Piedmont as the price of a firm alliance with France. The same motives did not apply to the countries south of the Po. Modena and Reggio (the town which Bonaparte declared most ripe for liberty) rose and expelled their sovereign, uniting with Ferrara and Bologna. They formed under French protection the Cispadane Republic, and Bonaparte's correspondence tells the care he took that aristocratic influence should not be altogether crushed and excluded. This indicates the change that had already taken place in his political sentiments. Josephine, his spouse, had, at the same time, joined him in Italy, and was received with almost regal honours in each city. Her circle at Milan might have been called a court, from its brilliancy; and exactions, it is said, were not spared to support her magnificence. All this had a very anti-republican effect on the young commander. The year 1796, however, left him leisure for nought but glory. Personal ambition had not time to blend with it, and conquest had not yet sounded the hour when the generous fame of this warrior was to be sullied by political macchiavellianism.*c*

Now, Venice, Rome, Naples began taking up arms; Genoa and Piedmont were not to be depended upon; Austria, with the help of the victories of the archduke Charles, was about to bring a fresh army into Italy. "We must have troops," wrote Bonaparte, "or Italy is lost." The Directory, unable to send him reinforcements, at least attempted to aid him with negotiations. Three treaties of peace were signed with Piedmont, Genoa, and Naples, which secured the neutrality of these states, the passage of the French troops into Italy, and the closing of the principal ports to the English (October). By means of threats and promises, the Directory prevented Rome and Venice from declaring themselves hostile; it authorised, as we have seen, the formation of the estates of the duke of Modena, who had violated the armistice, into the Cispadane Republic; it promised the Milanese the creation of a Lombard republic; finally, it signed a treaty of alliance with Spain, which was a

[1 Thus was Wurmser's army overthrown a second time; it had lost 22,000 men and 75 guns, and the remainder was blockaded in Mantua with its general.*f*]

renewing of the Family Compact, and whereby the two states mutually gave each other the assistance of 24,000 men and 40 vessels (August 18th). England grew alarmed. Her financial condition was distressing; half the ports of Europe were closed to her. Ireland threatened a revolt, which France prepared to serve as England had helped that in La Vendée. Pitt seemed to yield to the wishes of the English, and sent a plenipotentiary to Paris October 22nd, but he was merely desirous of gaining time.

The indefatigable Austria had again composed an army. Russia undertaking to provide for the tranquillity of Galicia, the imperial forces engaged in occupying the Polish provinces were sent to the Adriatic, and the marshal Alvinzi was appointed to the command of the new army, rallying the remains of Wurmser's and Beaulieu's routed divisions. A large body of this army, led by Davidowich, was to descend from the Tyrol, between the Lake of Garda and the Adige, Wurmser's first route, while the main force advanced straight over the Brenta towards the Adige. Unwilling again to raise the siege of Mantua, Bonaparte had few and inferior forces to oppose both the menaced points. Vaubois, however, was ordered to resist Davidowich, whilst the French commander-in-chief marched against Alvinzi for the purpose of giving him a severe check, and then rushing with his wonted celerity to crush Davidowich altogether in concert with Vaubois. He in consequence attacked Alvinzi the 6th of November on the Brenta, and had the advantage, but it was trifling. Immediately after, a despatch arrived that Vaubois had been driven back from the gorges of the Tyrol, and that he might not be able long to defend the position of Rivoli, the only obstacle betwixt Davidowich and Verona. This was dangerous. Unable to master the army before him, he was menaced with another in his rear. Bonaparte instantly retreated to the latter town, left his army there, and hurried in person to Rivoli, where he excited by his presence the courage of the soldiers, and rebuked two regiments which had fled in the last affair. He ordered it to be inscribed upon their colours that they no longer formed part of the army of Italy.

THE DEFEAT OF CALDIERO; THE VICTORY OF ARCOLA

He then hastened back to Verona, within a few leagues of which the Austrians had penetrated, Alvinzi taking a skilful and strong position on the heights of Caldiero. At daybreak, on the 12th of November, the French attacked Alvinzi with their wonted ardour, and endeavoured to drive him from Caldiero; the attempt was vain; they were worsted; and attributing their defeat to the rain and sleet, they were obliged to retire to Verona. Here for a day's space Bonaparte was stricken with despondency: he was, indeed, in a critical situation; the fruit of all his victories about to be ravished from him, through the fault, as he felt, of the Directory, who refused him reinforcements, whilst the Austrian army had been re-completed four times. He had asked but two regiments, and even they had not appeared. He vented his rage in a despatch, in which he despaired, he said, of preventing Alvinzi from relieving Mantua.

It was always in one of his dark fits of despite rather than despondency that the bright idea of retrieval and of re-seizing victory was struck forth, like lightning from the cloud of night. Bonaparte conceived a plan: his troops were ordered under arms at nightfall on the 14th; it was not for attack, however — they were ordered to evacuate Verona on the side remote from the enemy, leaving merely a force to guard the walls. Having issued from the town, they marched all night southwards along the Adige

till they reached Ronco, where, to their astonishment, a bridge was instantly thrown over the river, and the army soon found itself on the same side as the Austrians, and in their rear. Around Ronco extends a marsh impenetrable to troops, except by two causeways which diverge from it, one to Verona by the side of the Adige, another to the Austrian rear at Villanova, by the side of a rivulet called the Alpone. If the movement of Bonaparte escaped the attention of Alvinzi, the French might fall unexpectedly on the Austrian rear, and rout it; if it were, on the contrary, perceived, his small army, not exceeding 13,000 men, according to his own account, which at Caldiero had found itself unequal to cope with its enemies in the open field, could here be assailed but by the two causeways, where, as in a defile, courage must prevail over numbers: moreover, he was between Alvinzi and Mantua.

The Austrian, as it proved, was not to be taken by surprise; his hussars swept along the causeways: moreover, it had been overlooked by Bonaparte that the causeway leading to the Austrian rear crossed the Alpone by a bridge at Arcola, a village but a short distance from Ronco. The Austrians had possession of this bridge, and guarded it with cannon: to carry it was indispensably requisite to the projects of the French. Augereau led his brigade to the attack; but the Croatian soldiers and their two guns were more formidable than the legions and the parks that defended Lodi. Augereau was beaten back; the Austrians now came up in force, issued from the bridge of Arcola, and attacked their enemies on both causeways: but the best grenadiers here carried the day, and the Austrians were beaten back. Augereau made another attempt upon the bridge in vain.

Bonaparte himself then came up, threw himself among the soldiers, seized a flag, and bore it at their head upon the little bridge; but the fire was now more dreadful, and more than one gallant officer fell in covering the adventurous general with his body. Every effort was fruitless: the column was driven back by the shower of grape, and Bonaparte himself, borne with the flying throng far back off the causeway, sank knee-deep in the marsh, and barely escaped being taken. The cry of his danger brought back the French like a tide against the bridge, that held like a rock, and dashed back its invaders. The Croats behaved most gallantly. Had Davidowich and his Tyrolese done as much at Rivoli on the same day, the French would have been driven behind the Mincio.

All hope of surprising Alvinzi was now lost; but that general, instead of directing his efforts against Verona, persisted imprudently in following Bonaparte into the marshes of Ronco and Arcola. The second day was occupied in attempts of this kind, which the French, secure on the narrow causeway of opposing man to man, and making their cannon enfilade the long columns of the advancing enemy, always succeeded in repelling. The second day was, therefore, one of continued failures and losses to Alvinzi; and these were so great that on the third day Bonaparte found himself strong enough to leave both marsh and causeway, and advance into the firm plain. The bridge of Arcola was no longer important, a bridge having been thrown over the Adige below Alpone.

On the 17th, then, the third day of Arcola, was fought the decisive battle in the plain beyond the village. Bonaparte turned and surprised the enemy's left, not only by a strong division from Legnago, but by a small body of his guides, who, with trumpets sounding and arms clashing, menaced a formidable attack. Yet it cannot be said that on this third day manœuvres did much; the French showed in fact more mettle and obstinacy than the

Austrians, and beat them from the field. Alvinzi lost 18,000 men [12,000 slain and 6,000 captured], abandoned the field, and, like his predecessor, regained the Austrian Alps.

Bonaparte had thus decidedly defeated five successive armies, driven Beaulieu from Piedmont, beaten him at Montenotte, Millesimo, and Mondovi; again surprised him at the passage of the Po, and at Lodi decided the fate of the Milanese. Wurmser then took the command, was beaten at Lonato and Castiglione, and left the rest of northern Italy at the mercy of the French: reinforced, he made another invasion; his lieutenant beaten at Roveredo, himself worsted on the Brenta, he took refuge in Mantua. Then came Alvinzi with a fresh army; it perished on the causeways and in the fields of Arcola. But Alvinzi rallied another army; now the best born youths of Vienna flocked to fill its ranks, bearing standards worked by the hands of the empress, and uniting all the strength that enthusiasm and activity could furnish. This new army was divided, as usual, into two: one, under Alvinzi, was to descend the old route from the Tyrol, betwixt the Adige and the lake, the other by a circuit down the Brenta to relieve Mantua. The pope had this time promised to take up arms, and to send an army to co-operate with those of the emperor. The only difference betwixt the present plan of Alvinzi and the last was that then his chief force took the circuit against Verona, whereas now his chief force came from the Tyrol. Bonaparte only hesitated until he could be certain of this, and then he concentrated the mass of his army on the plain of Rivoli.

Here Alvinzi attacked him on the 14th of January, 1797. The lofty plain of Rivoli, high above the Adige, is a kind of intermediate step betwixt the river and the Alpine Montebaldo. The Austrian infantry had clambered the latter, and menaced his left; whilst the artillery was obliged to wind up a steep and narrow path from the river ere it could attack. The position was strong; but Alvinzi determined to remedy this by attacking on all sides, even in the rear. His advance from the mountain against the French right was at first successful.[c]

THE BATTLE OF RIVOLI AND DESTRUCTION OF THE AUSTRIANS

The small French army thus found itself escaladed from the front, closely pressed on its right and left, and cut off in the rear. Happily Masséna now arrived; thus Bonaparte now had 16,000 combatants and 60 cannon against 40,000 men, who were unable to make use of their artillery or their cavalry, and a third of whom were engaged in extraneous operations; he paid no attention either to the corps on the left bank, whose fire was merely innocuous, or to the soldiers of Lusignan, whom he pointed out in the distance to his men, saying, "Those are ours." He directed his most strenuous efforts upon the Incanale column, at the moment it was about to deploy on the plateau; it was attacked on each side by the infantry, charged in front by the cavalry, riddled with the fire of the artillery, which was directed upon the deep defile where more than 12,000 men were concentrated; all were overthrown, slain, or captured. Then Bonaparte bore down upon the Alvinzi columns, disbanded for the pursuit of his left wing; they were charged, routed, and forced over the precipices. Finally he turned, fired grape-shot upon Lusignan, flung him upon Rey's reserve, and forced him to lay down his arms.

Alvinzi retired in the greatest disorder by the narrow path leading to the heights of Corona; it was now possible to accomplish his ruin. Bonaparte,

NAPOLEON AT THE BATTLE OF RIVOLI
(From the painting by Philippoteaux at Versailles)

however, then learned that Provera had surprised the passage from the Adige at Anghuiari and was marching to relieve Wurmser in Mantua; he immediately left the task of putting an end to Alvinzi with Joubert and Rey, and made for Mantua with Masséna's division. This indefatigable corps had fought before Verona on January 13th, had marched all night to reach Rivoli, had just fought during the entire day of January 14th, and was now about to march all night and all the next day to engage before Mantua on January 16th; never had the much-vaunted activity of the Roman warriors achieved such wonders. Provera had reached Mantua, but there found fifteen hundred men, who repulsed all his attacks, though Wurmser debouched from the stronghold to aid him. But Bonaparte arrived and forced Wurmser to retreat into the fortress. Provera found himself surrounded, overthrown, and defeated by the three divisions; he surrendered with 6,000 men. The same day, Joubert devoted himself to the pursuit of Alvinzi upon the heights of Corona, turned both his flanks, cut off his line of retreat, and drew him into a veritable whirlpool wherein he was overwhelmed. Five thousand Austrians surrendered, 3,000 were slain, the remainder threw themselves into the Adige or fled to Roveredo and Calliano, harassed and pursued by Joubert, who only halted on reaching Lavis. The French once more took possession of their former positions, from Trent by Bassano, as far as Treviso.

Such then were the battles of Rivoli, La Favorita, and Corona, which cost the Austrians 24,000 prisoners, 12,000 slain, 60 guns, 24 standards, and of which Mantua was the last acquired trophy. Wurmser, reduced to the last extremities of famine, capitulated to the French (February 2nd, 1797), with 13,000 prisoners and 350 guns.*j*

A REVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN

Let us here pause, to observe that one general opinion regards German courage as phlegmatic, but durable and obstinate; whilst that of the French is considered impetuous in onset, but apt to evaporate. These battles seem to afford contrary conclusions: the Germans began spiritedly and triumphantly, and flagged as the struggle lasted; whilst the French seemed to increase in ardour and obstinacy. The days of Arcola and Castiglione, even more than Rivoli, bear witness to this.

Thus terminated the first campaign of Bonaparte; the most brilliant in modern history, considering the armies and the empire conquered, and the unequal numbers with which this was achieved. Soldiers and general covered themselves with glory, especially the latter, to whose military genius (skill is no longer the word), indomitable courage, and inexhaustible resources of mind, supplying the want of all others, complete success was due. Nor could it be said that the enemy was despicable; the Austrians could neither be compared to the rude Gauls of Cæsar's time, nor to the effeminate Persians of Alexander's. To the last they displayed the honourable courage of the soldier, and were, in their late attempts especially, gallantly led and ably commanded. That such a career of victory should have marked out the winner to deserve a crown is not wonderful.

Not tarrying even to receive the sword of Wurmser, Bonaparte had joined the legions marching to chastise Rome for its late demonstration. At Imola, the papal force, exhorted by priests, made a respectable stand, but was of course routed; when imperial Austria was driven from the field, the pontiff could hope nought, save from submission. Bonaparte proved generous.

[1797 A.D.]

Despite the exhortations of the Directory to crush the high priest of superstition, the French commander granted terms to the pope at Tolentino: deprived him, indeed, of the legations and Ancona; took from him a contribution, and more works of art; but still allowed him an ample political existence. Bonaparte, untainted by the bigotry of Jacobinism, which his high renown had set him far above, refused to gratify the Directory at the price of exciting a religious war. He even showed tolerance to the French emigrant priests, and ordered the Italian convents to nourish them.

THE INVASION OF AUSTRIA

Although defeated in Italy, where her eagles met the standards of Bonaparte, Austria was still triumphant over the French in Germany, and had driven them back over the Rhine. Some fresh success, a decisive advance, was requisite, in order to humble the imperial court and reduce it to sue for peace. Neither the Directory nor Bonaparte had yet extended their ambition to universal conquest. They had no longer any rancour against the humbled Austria. Their political hatred was now concentrated against England — a hatred born of national rivalry, and of the inability to strike a blow or inflict a wound. Already the Directory had succeeded in inducing Spain to form an offensive alliance. With the fleet of that country, of her own, and of Holland united, France hoped to dispute the empire of the sea. In this she but sacrificed the colonies and mariners of those unfortunate countries. England most dreaded the defection of Austria. Her defeat being foreseen, Lord Malmesbury was nevertheless despatched to Paris to propose a negotiation, by which France was to recover her colonies in return for Flanders being again ceded to Austria. The attempt was vain, except as a manifestation of a wish for peace; for Austria prized Flanders as the most troublesome of its possessions, and most difficult to defend. The Directory, aware that another victory would place Austria at its feet, and, calculating on this victory from the elation of the Italian army and the despondency of its foe, would hearken to no overture from Great Britain. Bernadotte was despatched with 30,000 troops of the army of the Rhine to reinforce Bonaparte; whilst Hoche, returned from a baffled expedition against Ireland, superseded Pichegru on the lower Rhine.

Ere leaving Italy behind, to pass the Alps of Tyrol and Friuli, it was requisite to be assured of the neutrality of Venice. This neutrality it promised, but found difficult to keep. The principles of the French were ever more hostile to aristocracy than to royalty; and though Bonaparte had tempered these in the republics of his institution, still the Cispadane and the embryo one of Milan teemed, as usual, with Jacobins and preachers of revolution. The Venetian cities of the mainland, ruled by the severe government of the state, from which even their nobles were excluded, adopted these new maxims of liberty. Those, especially, that adjoined the Milanese meditated an insurrection. The Venetians raised troops of Slavonians and of the peasant population, who were bigots, and as disinclined to the French as the townsmen were favourable to them. Thus two extreme parties were armed against each other. The government, in its defence, employed one whose zeal it was unable to temper, or prevent from confounding the French with their proselytes and admirers.

The French army marched ere the insurrection burst forth. The object of this was to appear spontaneous, and not to trouble their allies with acting either as defenders or police. Bonaparte crossed the Alps early in

BARODA LIBRARY

[1797 A.D.]

March.[1] The archduke Charles was now his opponent; but [illegible] promised reinforcements had not arrived in time. The principal stand made by the Austrians was on the banks of the Tagliamento. The French forced the passage after a sharp action, drove back their enemies, occupied town after town, and, in little more than a fortnight's space, arrived within four and twenty leagues of Vienna. But to advance upon that capital, without the co-operation of the armies of the Rhine, would not have been wise. Their advance had been promised, and did actually take place in some time; but a despatch from the Directory had informed Bonaparte not to expect their support. Jealousy of his glory, or perhaps the dissensions then breaking forth in the Directory itself, occasioned this: and the French general, accordingly, wrote to the archduke Charles, proposing peace. After a considerable delay, the Austrian court replied by sending negotiators, who signed a preliminary treaty, or armistice, at Leoben, a town in Styria, on the 18th of April.[c]

Fear overtook Vienna where, within the memory of man, no enemy had ever come by way of Italy. The Austrian envoys wished to discuss the conditions for their recognition of the republic. Napoleon refused. "The French Republic has no need to be acknowledged," he told them; "her position in Europe is that of the sun on the horizon. Blind is he who cannot see it."

Austria ceded Belgium, a concession which had long been agreed upon. She also ceded the Rhine provinces, but these on condition of an indemnity. The restitution of Lombardy was asked as this indemnity; but that Bonaparte refused, proposing a part of the Venetian territory, for he had made up his mind to punish or sacrifice Venice. This offer was accepted. Bonaparte made peace in his own name with hardly a thought of the Directory, whom he accused of having badly seconded him, and of having through jealousy retarded the operations of the Rhine armies. He also complained of Moreau's tardiness. This was the first germ of the misunderstanding between them.

While these negotiations were still in progress the news reached Bonaparte that the inhabitants of Bergamo, Verona, and other towns in the Venetian territory had risen against the French, and were in a state of insurrection. Horrible excesses had been committed; many French, even the sick in the hospitals, had been murdered, and hundreds thrown into prison. Filled with a righteous fury, Bonaparte vowed the total annihilation of the ancient sovereignty of the Queen of the Adriatic, and declared war against Venice.

[1 Bonaparte returned to the Adige, to execute the boldest march whereof history makes mention. After having once passed the Alps to enter Italy, he now prepared to cross them a second time, to throw himself beyond the Drave and the Mur, into the valley of the Danube, and to advance on Vienna. No French army had ever appeared in sight of that capital. In the accomplishment of so mighty an undertaking he had to defy appalling dangers. He left Italy in his rear — Italy, absorbed in terror and admiration, it is true, but still impressed with the belief that the French could not hold it long. The governments of Genoa, Tuscany, Naples, Rome, Turin, and Venice, irritated at the spectacle of the Revolution planted on their confines in the Cispadane and Lombardy, would probably rise in hostilities on tidings of the first reverse. In the uncertainty of the result, the Italian patriots remained quietly observant, to avoid compromising themselves. The army of Bonaparte was much inferior in strength to what it ought to have been, considering the vast hazards his plan involved. The divisions of Delmas and Bernadotte, recently arrived from the Rhine, did not comprise above 20,000 men; the old army of Italy contained upwards of 40,000, which, with the Lombard troops, might make about 70,000 in all. But it would be necessary to leave 20,000 at least in Italy, 15,000 or 18,000 in guard of the Tyrol, and thus 30,000 or thereabouts would be left to march on Vienna — an incredible temerity! — THIERS.d]

THE OVERTHROW OF VENICE

Bonaparte nourished the most hostile feelings against Venice. The republic hampered him, resisted his advice, his threats, and opposed him by an invincible passive resistance, and had allowed the Austrians to pass through its territory almost as they pleased. It was powerful enough to check Bonaparte for a while, to become a rallying-point at some time to the Italians. The aide-de-camp Junot, with all the bluntness of a soldier, conveyed a letter to the senate, which was dated the 9th of April, 1797, in which Bonaparte threatened them with war if the peasants were not disarmed, and if some hundreds of people arrested and imprisoned in the mines were not immediately set at liberty.

On the 17th, Easter Monday, four hundred French were massacred at Verona. This massacre was called the "Veronese Easter." The Slavonians and the insurgent peasants, knowing they were supported by the Austrians of Laudon, gave themselves over to every excess in revenge, killing even the sick in the hospitals. The Venetian authorities, either through complicity or impotency, did nothing. General Balland, who commanded the citadel, shut himself up inside it and threw shells into the town. Kilmaine hastened from Milan but was obliged to fight his way into Verona. He punished the town by levying an enormous tax upon it and ordered the peasants to be put to the sword.

Bonaparte encountered at Gratz two Venetian envoys, bearers of so-called explanations, in answer to Junot's letter. He was still in ignorance of the latest events. He spoke to them in the most violent language, and declared that if their government was incapable of disarming its subjects, he undertook to disarm them himself. "I have made peace," he said; "I have eighty thousand men, I will go and destroy your mines. I will be a second Attila for Venice. I will have no inquisition nor golden book — those are institutions of a barbarous epoch. Your government is too old, it must fall. I will no longer negotiate, I will dictate." On the 2nd of May, upon hearing of the scenes which had taken place in Verona, he published a declaration of war against the republic, and announced that the Venetian government had ceased to exist. He knew that the Directory was opposed to the idea of declaring war against Venice, and his own powers only extended to repulsing hostilities already commenced. But such considerations no longer stopped him. His arrangements with Austria demanded the sacrifice, or at least the remodelling, of the Venetian territory. The massacres of Verona, although punished, became for him a *casus belli*.

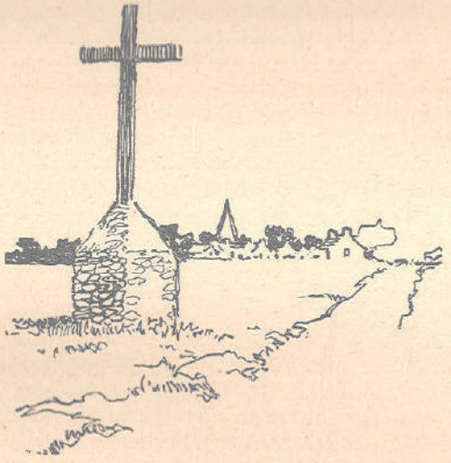
Venice was not without means of resistance, with her port and fortified lagunes, and the sea was open, as the French did not possess one man-of-war in the Adriatic. But Napoleon counted upon the terror of his name and of his victories. He also counted upon the faint-heartedness of a government which had shut itself up for two centuries in continued abstinence from action and had allowed all the activity of political life to die in its midst. This aristocracy had neglected or disdained Bonaparte's early threats, believing he would quickly exhaust his resources. His victorious return, his power, and the brilliancy of his victories struck the nobles dumb.

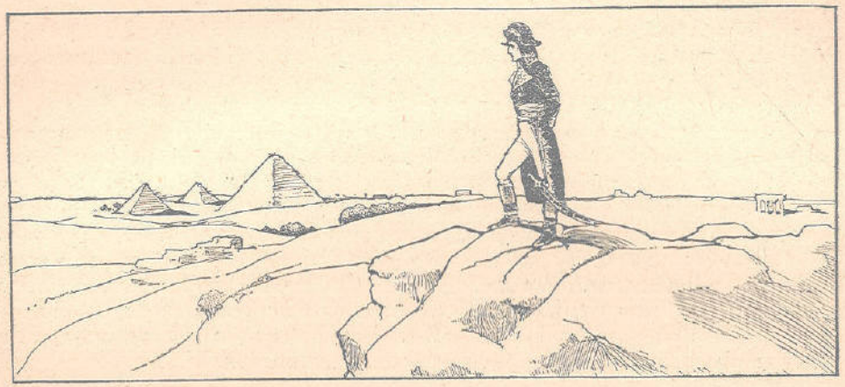
The grand council which, a few months earlier, had repulsed as an insult the idea of modifying the constitution, voted this modification almost unanimously and decided it should take place at the will of the general. The grand council then abdicated. Insurrections rose in other towns, the principles of the French Revolution were employed; that is to say, convents

were suppressed, feudal rights were abolished, and national domains were created.

Bonaparte had gone to Milan. There on the 16th of May he signed a treaty with the agents of the fallen government, by which he laid tributes and requisitions on their country, took possession of the greater part of its navy and arsenals, and reserved to himself the right of effecting the territorial changes which he might judge necessary to his policy. He had this treaty ratified by the new municipality, which submitted to it.

Whilst it was his fixed intention to despoil the republic before handing it over to the Austrians, he spoke to the Venetians of the glory of Italy and of his wish to render her free and independent of foreigners. He spoke of the friendship and unity of the two republics and he imposed the same language on his agents. An analogous revolution took place at Genoa also under pressure from France. The patriots or democrats, supported by the French agent Faypoult and then by Bonaparte himself, forced the aristocratic party to abdicate and change the form of the government.[d]





CHAPTER XV

THE RISE OF NAPOLEON

[1797–1798 A.D.]

WHILST the army of Italy was immortalising itself by humbling the first power of the continent, the five directors of France could not vindicate for themselves the least share of its fame.[1] They continued to hold their footing, indeed, as sovereigns, on the narrow pedestal of their immediate party, the conventionalists and regicides. They relied on the army, too, as auxiliaries; but they soon found that public opinion was irrevocably averse to their persons and their maxims; and that, with liberty of election still left to the country, they could never be friends with or stand before its representation.

The newly chosen third of the legislative body, all allowed to be re-elected, had, from the first, formed an opposition, together with the most respectable of the conventionalists; and it was evident, when the eighteen months, the interval fixed by the constitution for the re-election of another third, should elapse, a majority would be found against the old conventionalists. This was insufferable in their eyes; and they used every means to provide against it. Their principal weapon was the declaration that their opponents were royalists at heart, and consequently traitors to the constitution, and that they themselves were the only genuine republicans.

[1 Yet the Directory, although still the object of ruthless obloquy at home, inspired the European powers with a profound dread. "The half of Europe," wrote Mallet du Pan,[b] to the court of Vienna, "is on its knees before this divan, to purchase the honour of becoming its vassal." Fifteen months of firm and glorious sway had rooted the five directors in power, but had at the same time developed their passions and characters. Men cannot long act in conjunction without experiencing individual distastes or predilections, and without associating conformably to their inclinations. Carnot, Barras, Rewbell, Larévellière-Lépeaux, and Letourneur were already divided, in accordance with this invariable result. —THIERS.[c]]

[1797 A.D.]

OBSTACLES OF THE DIRECTORY

No doubt the thorough royalists, the partisans of the house of Bourbon, did rally to this new opposition, did mingle covertly with its councils, and give some truth to the inculpation. It was unwise, at least as yet, of the republican opposition not to repudiate them. "Had I been consulted," said Madame de Staël,[d] "I never would have counselled the establishment of a republic in France. At the same time, when it was established, I certainly would not have counselled its overthrow." But when the second third of the legislative council was re-elected, and thereby a fresh infusion of anti-conventionalists admitted to power, then indeed a royalist party began decidedly to form and to show itself. Thus, in 1797, there were three distinct shades of political opinion — the conventionalists or regicides, the constitutional republicans, and the royalists. The latter composed a very small minority, that looked up to Pichegru as its head; but as it voted and acted with the constitutionalists in opposition to the Directory, the parties became mingled in a great measure, and compounded. They came to form a club, called that of Clichy, in which the plan of parliamentary conduct was discussed and arranged; and, as is generally the case, the extreme opinions soon gave a colour to the entire association.

"In civil dissensions, men always come to adopt the opinions of which they are accused." Thus the conventionalists accusing all their enemies, that is, the majority of the nation, of being royalist, the latter accepted the reproach; and public opinion, in despite and despair at seeing the name of republic monopolised by a faction, did turn towards monarchy. This, however, was but a tendency, a prospect, a last resource, kept in reserve.

When the second third of the legislative body was re-elected in 1797 the conventionalists became the minority. And here instantly appeared the mortal defect of the system. The legislature held one opinion, the executive another; and the constitution had provided no means for restoring harmony. Anarchy, in fact, became once more probable. In every successive phase and scene of the Revolution, the same fact recurs of a rational majority overpowered by a factious minority. Three of the directors — Barras, Rewbell, and Larévellière-Lépeaux — were cordially united in upholding the interest of what they called the "revolution," by which they meant the permanence of the conventionalists and of the old revolutionary laws. Carnot differed from them in being attached solely to liberty and the republic, in not insisting on the predominance of any faction, and in admitting the necessity of stooping to the constitutional majority in all short of royalism. Carnot took the honest view of the question; and, despite his old career with the terrorists, he was looked up to by the constitutional party. Letourneur followed Carnot's opinions. The period had now arrived for one of the directors to go out. The lot unfortunately fell, or was made to fall, on Letourneur; and thus, although Barthélemy was elected by the councils to replace him, Barras, Rewbell, and Larévellière-Lépeaux still had the majority in the executive.

Barras presented the singular union of a furious Jacobin with the manners and despotic habits of an ancient noble.[1] He resembled his friend Danton, coated with court varnish. Rewbell was a pragmatic lawyer, endued with the obstinacy of dullness; Larévellière-Lépeaux a visionary, who aspired to form a sect called the Theophilanthropists. This scheme of becoming a prophet gave a certain vigour to a mind naturally puerile,

[1 Thibaudeau[e] likens him to a "prince badly reared."]

and led Larévellière-Lépeaux from the moderation natural to him (for he had been a Girondist) to adopt extreme Jacobinism. He could not pardon the constitutionalists their tolerance of priests and temples. Such was the trio destined to tread out the last shadow of liberty in France, and to prepare the way for military despotism.

The session, which commenced in April, 1797, after the election of the second third of the legislature, was marked by mistrust and odium towards the Directory, which was not only mortified in its political views by the return of the émigrés, the re-establishment of priests, and by the severe animadversion passed upon the conduct of its emissaries in the colonies; but was also shorn of power, and controlled in the management of the revenue. The opposition, obedient to the club of Clichy, in many instances lost sight of both prudence and moderation; many members displaying, too soon and too openly, the wish to undo the whole work of the Revolution. This alarmed the vanity as well as the interests of the nation, and served to rally the democratic party out of doors to the Directory.

One motive of the Clichians was especially ill advised; it was that of accusing the generals of the armies of Italy and the Rhine — Bonaparte and Hoche — of divers arbitrary and illegal acts; the levying and disposing of funds; but more especially the destruction by Bonaparte of the old republics of Venice and Genoa. The gravity of this latter accusation almost excused its temerity; but its unfortunate effect was to outrage the armies, and to attach their fidelity to the directorial cause. Bonaparte had the means in his hands of taking instant vengeance. He had seized on the papers of the count d'Entraigues, containing strong traces, if not proofs, of Pichegru's being in correspondence with the Bourbons. Pichegru was the president of the Five Hundred, and one of the leaders of the club of Clichy. Bonaparte thus supplied the Directory with a pretext for the blow meditated. Hoche shared in the sentiment of his brother general; and, under pretence of drafting troops to Brittany for his Irish expedition, he brought divisions of his army to menace the capital and support the Directory.

"The government," says Thibaudeau,[e] "had two ways of crushing the royalists — either by violence and the interference of the armies, or by uniting itself with the constitutionalists. The first destroyed the republic, and rendered liberty impossible; the latter might have saved both." Divers attempts were made to reconcile the Directory — that is, Barras, Rewbell, and Larévellière-Lépeaux — with the constitutionalists; for Carnot, though not their personal friend, agreed with their maxims. Madame de Staël exercised her influence to bring about this reconciliation, of which a change of ministry was to be the seal. Talleyrand, whom she recommended as foreign minister, was indeed appointed as one of a ministry by no means in harmony with the majority of the legislature.

THE AFFAIR OF THE 18TH FRUCTIDOR (SEPTEMBER 4TH)

All legal means of deciding the differences were thus set aside, and amicable terms rejected. The troops of Hoche gathered round the capital, and even approached within the distance of twelve leagues prescribed by law. The constitutionalist deputies remonstrated: the royalists were half indignant, half frightened. Another combat or civil war became inevitable in the metropolis; and each party mustered its forces. The legislative majority principally relied on the national guard, suppressed and mutilated after the

affair of Vendémiaire, but which they hoped to reorganise in a short time. The immediate guard of the assemblies was another force, small indeed, but sufficient to rally the honest and moderate citizens, as well as the anti-Jacobin youths of Paris, provided the latter had yet recovered courage from their defeat on the day of the sections. The Directory, on the other hand, relied on the army — upon Hoche and upon Bonaparte; for as to the populace, this class at length became disgusted, and reckless of political events, since they had found defeat possible, and victory of small advantage. In the language of the day, *le peuple avait donné sa démission*, the mob had sent in its resignation.

Both Bonaparte and Hoche answered characteristically the call of the Directory. Hoche implicated himself, and pledged his wife's fortune, to support what he considered to be the republican cause. Bonaparte incited his army to assemble, to deliberate; and drew up the most furious and jacobinical petitions.[1] With these he forwarded his lieutenant Augereau, to serve the Directory in a *coup de main;* thus superseding Hoche, whilst the money promised by Bonaparte never arrived. Already the ambition of this man, born of victory, and nurtured to some growth by the great legislative duties which the reorganisation of conquered Italy imposed upon him, began to show itself in jealousy of all other power. He was willing to aid the Directory to crush their opponents, who were his enemies, but neither to make them independent nor himself their slave.

The Directory and the legislative majority were now in the respective positions in which the Revolution had placed all its parties; that is, in a state of savage hostility — not open civil war, but that of tigers or of Indians, which consisted in lying in wait, and springing unawares on the foe. On the 18th Fructidor (the 4th of September, 1797) the blow was struck. Under pretence of a review, troops were brought to the capital, and placed at the disposal of Augereau.[g]

During the night, the Tuileries were invested with 12,000 men, and 40 guns, and the gates stormed by Augereau's troops. A certain number of deputies were assembled in the chamber of the Five Hundred. A general officer came and requested them to leave; they declined, and Ramel, the officer in command of the guard of the legislative body, disobeyed an order from Augereau, enjoining him to evacuate the Tuileries. But the soldiers under Ramel's command seemed to hesitate and muttered amongst themselves, "We refuse to fight for Louis XVIII." For the soldier, as for the multitude who do not understand gradations, the struggle was only between the Revolution and the Old Régime.

Augereau entered with his staff, augmented by the most violent revolutionaries of the suburbs, Santerre, Rossignol, etc., amidst cries of "Long live the Republic!" He arrested Ramel, whose men made no attempt to protect him, sent him captive to the Temple, with those deputies discovered in the Tuileries. During this time the Directory guard arrested Barthélemy, one of the opposing directors, in the Luxembourg, by order of the "triumvirate"; Carnot escaped through the gardens and it was impossible to lay hands on him. He succeeded in leaving France and took refuge in Germany.

A number of members of the council of the Ancients had assembled that

[1 His letters were furious: "Have the émigrés arrested," he wrote to the Directory, "destroy the influence of the foreigners. If you have need of force, call out the troops. Order the destruction of the presses of the journalists, bought up by England and more sanguinary than ever Marat was." He added the imperious advice to repress with severity the club of Clichy and to allow the existence of only five or six good newspapers, and those constitutional.*f*]

morning in their chamber from whence they were expelled by the soldiery. Thirty of them returned to the Tuileries to endeavour to gain re-entrance to their chamber. This deed of valour secured them marks of respect during their progress through the streets, but the populace gave them no assistance and they were driven back by the troops. They then gathered together in the abode of their president Lafond-Ladébat. There the constables arrested them, and from thence they were taken to the Temple. Eighty-five members of the Five Hundred, assembled in a neighbouring house, dispersed; many were captured in their own houses. Whilst the opposing members of the council were making this honourable impotent attempt at resistance, the members of the party favourable to the Directory met upon the invitation of the "triumvirs," those of the Five Hundred at the Odéon, those of the Ancients at the School of Medicine. There were amongst them not only Mountainists, but ancient Girondins, who, like Larévellière-Lépeaux, believed they would save the republic. The Directory sent them a message, informing them of those measures which, it is said, it had been forced to take "for the salvation of the country and the preservation of the constitution."

A proclamation from the Directory to the nation detailed the facts of the conspiracy which would have ruined the republic, if the Directory had waited one day longer. Herein were unjust imputations mingled with real facts which did not at all demonstrate the imminent peril affirmed by the Directory. As for the treason of Pichegru, which the Directory denounced according to the document transmitted by Bernadotte, if the Directory had contented themselves with bringing this culprit and his accomplices to justice, they would have secured Carnot, and all the republicans with him, and the majority of the two councils would have yielded without a *coup d'état.*[h]

It has been said that "it cost but a single cannon-shot and that charged merely with powder to annihilate the republic, which from this fatal night ceased to exist."

The minority of the two councils now assembled approved, of course, of the violence offered to the constitution, both in the persons of deputies and directors; and by a decree declared the elections of one-half the departments of France annulled. Seventy of the most distinguished deputies were condemned to transportation; a sentence which, considering the climate of Cayenne, and the ill usage experienced on their voyage, was almost tantamount to death. Nor did the successful dictators make the least difference betwixt royalists and constitutionalists. Barbé-Marbois, Portalis, Tronson du Coudray, Carnot, Pastoret, were condemned to the same penalty as Pichegru or Delarue. The prisoners were conveyed to the Temple, where they occupied the apartments of the unfortunate Louis and his queen. The circumstance must have smitten the hearts of those amongst them who, like Bourdon, had been in the convention, and had voted the deaths of their sovereigns.

The new dictators were not content with decimating the legislature; they formed another list of proscription, composed of the editors and writers in forty-eight journals. They were condemned to transportation. Thus were the representatives both of the nation and of public opinion sacrificed to the regicide faction, who declared, in the language of Robespierre and Marat, that it was done for the sake of liberty and for the safety of the Revolution!

The old terrorists' laws were now again put in action; those against émigrés and their relatives were enforced; and the unfortunate priests, who had flocked home on the permission of the late legislature, were now transported to Cayenne for having trusted to it. The "rump" of the convention (for the remaining members of the council corresponded precisely to this term) now endowed the directors with despotic power, gave them liberty to stop all journals and suppress all political societies. In many cases their mandate was a judgment that superseded the necessity of trial. But indeed, after having seized and condemned the majority of the legislature, all sanction was needless for a supreme authority already usurped. In all their acts the Directory now showed themselves worthy of their origin and of the means by which they were upheld. By a stroke of the pen they cancelled two-thirds of the national debt. Their statesman, Sieyès, proposed to complete the work of the Revolution, by a law of exile against all who were noble, even against females nobly born, except they espoused a plebeian. Barras, however, resisted this, which struck at himself. Their foreign policy was equally frantic. They broke off the conference at Lille, in which Lord Malmesbury, on the part of England, offered every fair condition of peace, and endeavoured to act the same part by the negotiation with Austria.[i]

THE DIRECTORY AND ITS GENERALS

The Directory, however, felt gratified with the manner in which events had proceeded. The only cause of disquietude existed in the silence of General Bonaparte, who had not written for a long interval, nor sent the promised remittance. Augereau hastily composed epistles to General Bonaparte and his friends in the army, for the purpose of describing the event in the most favourable colours.

Already discontented with Moreau, the Directory had resolved to recall him, when it received a communication from him which caused a very deep sensation. Moreau had seized, after the passage of the Rhine, the papers of General Klinglin, and found amongst them the whole correspondence between Pichegru and the prince of Condé. He had kept this correspondence secret; but he decided upon imparting it to the government immediately subsequent to the 18th Fructidor. It was the general impression, with regard to his behaviour in this instance, that he loved not the republic sufficiently to expose the treachery of his friend, and yet was too lukewarm a friend to retain the secret to the end. His political character was here exhibited in its real light, that is to say, as weak, vacillating and uncertain. The Directory summoned him to Paris to render an account of his conduct. On examining the correspondence it found a full confirmation of all it had otherwise learned respecting Pichegru. It likewise discovered proof of Moreau's own fidelity to the republic; but it rewarded his supineness and procrastination by depriving him of his command and leaving him destitute of employment at Paris.

THE DEATH OF HOCHE

Hoche, still at the head of his army of the Sambre and Meuse, had undergone during the whole of the past month the most anxious solicitude. To recompense his attachment, the Directory united the two great armies of the Sambre and Meuse and the Rhine into one, and appointed him its generalissimo. It was the most extensive command in the republic.

Unfortunately the health of the young general prevented him from enjoying the triumph of the Directory and this testimony of regard on the part of the government. He at length took to his bed on the 17th of September, and

expired on the 18th amidst the most distressing agonies. The whole army was in the deepest consternation, for it adored its young general. The mournful intelligence spread with rapidity and struck with affliction all true republicans, who placed the greatest hopes in the talents and patriotism of Hoche. The report of poison immediately circulated. The Directory instituted magnificent obsequies to his memory.

Thus closed one of the fairest and most interesting existences that adorned the Revolution. This time at least it was not by the scaffold. Hoche was only in his twenty-ninth year. As a private soldier in the French guards, a few months had sufficed to perfect his education. To the physical courage of the warrior, he added an energetic character, a superior intelligence, an accurate knowledge of men, an excellent capacity for political emergencies, and, moreover, the inspiring impulse of enthusiasm. This with him amounted to a passion, ardent and uncontrollable, which proved perhaps the predisposing cause of his death. The peculiar circumstances of his career increased the interest his manifold qualities excited. He had always met with untoward accidents to arrest his fortune. Conqueror at Weissenburg and ready to enter upon a glorious scene of action, he was suddenly thrown into a dungeon; released from imprisonment to prosecute the harassing warfare of La Vendée, he on that unpropitious stage played an ever-memorable part, and at the moment he was about to execute his great project on Ireland, a tempest and failures in his combinations again defeated his expectations; removed to the army of the Sambre and Meuse, he gained an important victory at its head, and once more had his progress suspended by the preliminaries of Leoben; lastly, in command of the army of Germany, with Europe still disposed for war, he had a vast future before him when he was struck amidst his dazzling prospects, and hurried to the grave by a disease of forty-eight hours' virulence.

If, however, a cherished memory can compensate the loss of life, he might be well content to surrender his, even thus prematurely. A series of splendid victories, an arduous pacification, a universality of talent, a probity without stain, the belief general amongst republicans that he would have curbed the conqueror of Rivoli and the Pyramids, that his ambition would have remained republican and formed an insuperable obstacle to the imperious pride that aspired to a throne; in a word lofty deeds, noble inspirations, a youth of the fairest promise — these are what constitute his renown. And assuredly it is great enough! Let us not pity him then for dying young. It will always redound more to the glory of Hoche, Kléber, and Desaix, that they did not live to be marshals.[1] They all bore the distinction of citizens and freemen to the tomb, and were not reduced like Moreau to become a fugitive in foreign armies.[c]

MARTIN ON THE MEANING OF HOCHE'S DEATH

The friends of Hoche have been divided in opinion as to whether a crime was in question in his death. The family always believed so. Who was the guilty person? Was there a guilty person? The truth will never be known.

What were the ideas of Hoche at the time of his death? His whole conduct attests that he remained to the end an impassioned republican. "A

[1 To these should be added the name of Marceau, who was killed in protecting the retreat of Jourdan near Alterkirchen in 1796. He was only 27, and the Austrians took part in rendering his body military honours.]

monarch," he wrote "would be forced to create a nobility and the resurrection of that nobility would cause a new revolution. We must have a government which will consecrate the principle of equality — that government can be only a republic." He no longer had the Mountainist exaggeration of his first youth: he understood the necessity for a wisely organised government and desired the maintenance of the constitution of the year III modified by the substitution of a president for the five directors as in America. While tolerant of all beliefs, he was of the religion of Rousseau, as were most of the great men of the Revolution. His faith in the God of justice and goodness is attested both by his intimate correspondence with his wife and friends and by invocation which terminates the speech he pronounced before the army of the West on the occasion of the festival celebrated in honour of the first victories of the army of Italy. "God, who watches over the destinies of this empire, who hast directed our swords in the fight that man whom thou hast created should be free: let not any dominion prevail to govern him! Root out the factions from the midst of the republic and protect our holy laws!"

If we would appreciate Hoche and Bonaparte at their true moral value we must compare what each has said of the other. Whilst Hoche was wearing himself out in his painful and dreary mission of the west, Bonaparte in Italy was winning the dazzling triumphs which Hoche felt himself capable of equalling. Many minds, otherwise great and noble, would have been soured by such a comparison, but Hoche entirely forgets himself to express in letters of a touching generosity his enthusiasm for a rival's glory: he defends with passion "*ce brave jeune homme*," against those who venture to accuse him of ambition! Napoleon at St. Helena has spoken of Hoche whose memory haunts him: he refers to him as a kind of inferior Bonaparte of a challenging ambition, "who dreamed of seizing the government by force and who would have obliged him to crush him by disputing with the supreme power or who would have come to terms, because he loved money and pleasures!" Hoche would have come to terms, that is, sold himself for money! — such words reveal in him who has said them how small a soul could be associated with great genius!

The death of Hoche was the greatest misfortune which could have befallen the republic and France. What might have been the future of that country if Bonaparte had disappeared instead of Hoche? In the state in which France at that time was it was inevitable that she should pass under military supremacy. But how different the conditions might have been! The good sense and disinterestedness of Hoche might have greatly tempered the dangers and abuses of that supremacy and France might have gradually returned to a regulated liberty by peaceful ways. Providence has been harsh toward France. She lost the man who might have helped her to salvation; she remained in the hands of him who was to ruin her![h]

BONAPARTE'S POLITICS

Bonaparte held, as we have seen, something like a monarch's court in Italy, waiting till the tardy diplomacy of Austria could make up its mind to accept peace at a disadvantage. At the different stages of victory he had parcelled out Italy, according to the probabilities of the hour, into Cispadane, Transpadane, Emilian, and other republics; but time rendered his projects, like his ambition, more vast; whilst the subjugation of Venice changed altogether the views which had dictated the preliminaries of

Leoben. By these Austria, in recompense for the Netherlands, was to receive the Venetian provinces to the Oglio, including Mantua. Venice, neutral, was only to be robbed; but Venice, now in distress, was not only to be robbed, but murdered. Bonaparte proposed to make the Adige the boundary of Austria, giving her, in lieu of Mantua, Venice itself; thus sacrificing, with the apathy of a barbarian, the oldest republic in Europe, the only link of the kind left betwixt classic and modern times. But what was base in Bonaparte to sacrifice was still more base of Austria to accept — Austria, in whose behalf the hapless Venice had armed. It showed that in diplomacy the monarchy of old lineage and the upstart republic were equally selfish and Macchiavellian.

Westward of the Adige, Bonaparte amalgamated the Transpadane and Cispadane republics into one, which he called the Cisalpine. To complete its territory he took the Valtelline from the Grisons; whilst, to give this French colony (for it was no other) a friendly seaport, he revolutionised Genoa, which he made the capital of a Ligurian republic. The Directory insisted on the Cisalpine being organised in imitation of the French; which was completely effected, Bonaparte naming the five directors — who thus based their rights, as did Barras and Larévellière-Lépeaux, not on the people but on the soldiery. It must, however, be confessed that the general in all things thought to correct the narrow prejudices of the regicides. He was tolerant to priests and nobles, and chided the Genoese for proposing to imitate the bigotry of the French revolutionary laws. His opinion of Jacobinism in the Directory is sufficiently evinced by his impatience at finding his friend and secretary signing his surname Fauvelet, in lieu of his territorial title, De Bourrienne. A decree had so ordered it. "Sign as usual," ordered Bonaparte, "and never mind the lawyers."

He was strangely impeded in completing the negotiations for peace begun at Leoben. Austria hoped to profit by the royalist reaction which the *coup d'état* of Fructidor marred — one reason for the general's supporting the Directory; but that body threw equal obstacles in his way, and bade him demand the Isonzo as a limit, in lieu of the Adige. He determined to disobey.[g]

On September 27th, began a fresh diplomatic duel, this time between Bonaparte and the astute Austrian diplomatist Cobenzl. According to Cobenzl's account of Napoleon's conduct at these meetings there is apparently good ground for believing the story of the breaking of the porcelain vase, for he complains that Bonaparte drank "glass after glass of brandy," and declared himself "the equal of any king in the world."

THE PEACE OF CAMPO-FORMIO

The meetings between Bonaparte and Cobenzl, the Austrian plenipotentiary, took place at Udine in Friuli. Hoche was no more; Bonaparte altered his tone towards the French government. He had, however, received a telegram on the 29th of September, written by Larévellière-Lépeaux in the name of the Directory, which does much honour to that director and cancels many of his faults. "The whole question," said Larévellière-Lépeaux, "reduces itself to whether or not we want to deliver up Italy to Austria. Now the French government ought not to do this, and it will not." And he proposed, as an ultimatum, that Italy should be free as far as the Isonzo, that is including the whole of Venetia. He protested against the shame of forsaking Venice. "It would be an inexcusable baseness, whose consequences," he added, "would be worse than the most unfavourable chance of war." Certainly, if the war was to be continued, it was better for French interest, as well as for French honour, to fight so as to assure Italy's independence, instead of risking mishaps in Egypt, when France was not even mistress of the seas. Bonaparte absolutely ignored this despatch.

On the 10th of October he informed the Directory that the peace would be signed on the following evening or negotiations would be broken off. He did not once mention the ultimatum sent to him by the Directory.

On Bonaparte's definite refusal to give back Mantua, Cobenzl declared that the emperor was prepared to go to any length rather than to consent to such a peace. Bonaparte rose, and seizing a porcelain vase from a stand said, "Very well, let it be war then! Before the autumn is over I shall have shattered your monarchy as I smash this piece of porcelain." He went out and sent to inform the archduke Charles that hostilities would recommence in twenty-four hours. Cobenzl, terrified, sent after him to his headquarters, to tell him that his ultimatum was accepted. Bonaparte had counted upon this when acting the scene of anger. The treaty was signed on the following day (October 17th, 1797) at Campo-Formio, near Udine.[h]

France kept the boundary of the Rhine and Mainz subject to the ratification of the empire. The Cisalpine Republic had the boundary of the Adige. This republic was composed of Milan and Lombardy, of what had lately formed the Cispadane Republic, the territories of Bergamo, Brescia, and Mantua; Bonaparte soon afterwards added the Valtelline, taken from the Grisons. Austria received not only Friuli, Istria, and the Boccho di Cattaro as stipulated at Leoben, but also Venice and the Venetian territory as far as the Adige and the Po. France took for herself several Venetian establishments in Albania and the Ionian Islands. A special article stipulated the release of La Fayette who was taken from the prison of Olmütz with Maubourg and Pusy. Such was the celebrated Treaty of Campo-Formio which was so much vaunted; and deservedly so, since it gave France peace on the continent, now become so necessary, and secured her the Rhine frontier. From the Italian point of view it was less satisfactory. The ancient republic of Venice paid the whole cost. Bonaparte had sacrificed her to risky or interested schemes. Venetian patriots, comparing the lot of their country to that of Poland, were untiring in their imprecations on the man who had abandoned them.

By seizing the navy and arsenals of Venice under diverse pretexts, such as that of indemnifying himself for sums due and not paid; by joining the Venetian vessels to those of Admiral Brueys, which were summoned from Toulon, and thus establishing at Corfu a squadron ready for war, he meant to secure a maritime position and a naval force which would permit France to dominate the Adriatic and perhaps the Mediterranean. He meditated occupying Malta and dreamed of detaching Egypt from the Ottoman Empire — projects which he expressed with a vague reserve, for they seemed chimerical; and yet he was to realise them.

The Treaty of Campo-Formio caused universal joy in Paris. The public, weary of the warlike ardour of the Directory, had but one voice to acclaim the disinterestedness of the young general who seemed to be renouncing the glory of a fresh campaign. The Directory, though displeased at the contempt shown for its instructions, dared not refuse ratification for fear of raising the whole public and the army of Italy against it. In giving that ratification, it nominated Bonaparte plenipotentiary at Rastatt and general-in-chief of the "army of England." Bonaparte left Berthier at Milan with

30,000 men who were to remain there until the general peace. He passed through Switzerland, where he was accorded the most brilliant reception, and presented himself at Rastatt, where was the congress of the empire. He did not stay there longer than was necessary to exchange ratifications of Campo-Formio with Cobenzl and to make sure of the acquisition of Mainz; he left Bonnier and Treilhard, who had been given to him as colleagues, to adjust the prolonged difficulties which arose in regard to the princes of the empire. *f*

NAPOLEON IN PARIS

Bonaparte left Rastatt, traversed France incognito, and arrived at Paris on the evening of the 15th Frimaire, year VI (the 5th of December, 1797). He proceeded straightway to seclude himself in a small house he had purchased in the rue Chantereine. This singular man, in whom pride was so paramount a quality, had all a woman's art in keeping out of sight. At the surrender of Mantua, he evaded the honour of personally superintending Wurmser's evacuation; now at Paris, he sought to hide himself in an obscure dwelling. He affected, in his language, dress, and habits, a simplicity which struck the imaginations of men, and the more profoundly from the effect of contrast.

The Directory forthwith determined to prepare a triumphal festival for the formal presentation of the Treaty of Campo-Formio. It was appointed to be celebrated, not in the hall of audience, but in the great court of the Luxembourg. Everything was disposed to render this solemnity one of the most imposing of the Revolution.

The day selected for the ceremony was the 10th of December, 1797. The Directory, the public functionaries, and the spectators were all in their places awaiting with impatience the illustrious mortal whom few amongst them had yet seen. He appeared at length, accompanied by M. Talleyrand, who was deputed to present him; for it was the diplomatist to whom the immediate homage was tendered. All beholders were struck by the attenuated frame, the pallid yet Roman countenance, the bright and flashing eye, of the young hero. An extraordinary emotion thrilled through the assembly. A thousand acclamations burst forth as he advanced upon the arena. "Long live the Republic!" "Long live Bonaparte!" were the cries which resounded from all sides. When they subsided, M. de Talleyrand raised his voice, and, in a judicious and concise speech, affected to refer the glory of the general, not to himself but to the Revolution, to the armies, to the great nation, in fine. Everybody said and repeated that the young general was devoid of ambition, for great was the apprehension of the contrary. When M. de Talleyrand had ceased, Bonaparte spoke in a firm tone the disjointed sentences which follow:

"CITIZENS:

"The French people, to be free, had kings to combat. To obtain a constitution founded on reason, they had eighteen centuries of prejudices to overcome. The constitution of the year III and you have triumphed over these obstacles. Religion, feudality, royalty, have successively during twenty centuries governed Europe; but from the peace you have just concluded dates the era of representative governments. You have succeeded in organising the great nation, whose vast territory is circumscribed only because nature herself has assigned it bounds. You have done more. The two fairest regions of Europe, formerly so celebrated for the arts, the sciences, the great men to whom they gave birth, behold with the loftiest hopes the genius of liberty arise from the ashes of their ancestors. They are two pedestals on which the fates will plant two powerful nations. I have the honour to present to you the treaty signed at Campo-Formio, and ratified by his majesty the emperor. Peace guarantees the liberty, prosperity, and glory of the republic. When the happiness of the French people shall repose on better organic laws, all Europe will become free."

Following the new impulse given to the public mind, Barras offered fresh laurels to Bonaparte, and invited him to gather them in England. After these three harangues, Chénier's hymn was chanted in chorus, with the accompaniment of a magnificent orchestra. Two generals next advanced, ushered by the minister-at-war: they were the brave Joubert, the hero of the Tyrol, and Andréossy, one of the most distinguished officers of the artillery.

Aloft, and fluttering in the breeze, they carried with them a resplendent flag, consecrated by the Directory to the army of Italy at the close of the campaign: the new oriflamme of the republic. It was studded with numberless characters embossed in gold, and those characters bore the following mementos:

The army of Italy has made 150,000 prisoners; it has captured 166 standards, 550 pieces of siege artillery, 600 pieces of field artillery, 5 bridge equipages, 9 ships of the line, 12 frigates, 12 corvettes, 18 galleys. Armistices with the kings of Sardinia and Naples, the pope, the dukes of Parma and Modena. Preliminaries of Leoben. Convention of Montebello with the republic of Genoa. Treaties of peace of Tolentino and Campo-Formio. Liberty given to the people of Bologna, Ferrara, Modena, Massa-Carrara, Romagna, Lombardy, Brescia, Bergamo, Mantua, Cremona, a part of the district of Verona, Chiavenna, Bormio, and the Valtelline; to the people of Genoa and of the imperial fiefs, to the people of the departments of Corcyra, the Ægean Sea, and Ithaca. Transmitted to Paris the masterpieces of Michelangelo, Guercino, Titian, Paul Veronese, Correggio, Albani, Carracci, Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, etc. Triumphed in eighteen pitched battles: Montenotte, Millesimo, Mondovi, Lodi, Borghetto, Lonato, Castiglione, Roveredo, Bassano, San Giorgio, Fontana-Niva, Caldiero, Arcola, Rivoli, La Favorita, the Tagliamento, Tarwis, Neumarkt. Fought 67 engagements.

After the speeches were concluded, the generals advanced to receive the embrace of the president of the Directory. At the moment Bonaparte was clasped to the bosom of Barras, the four other directors, impelled as it were by an involuntary impulse, threw themselves into the arms of the general. Tumultuous acclamations rent the air; the people outside, clustered in the adjoining streets, re-echoed the shouts; the cannon boomed, the music played; all brains were in a delirium, a whirl of intoxication. Thus it was that France cast herself headlong into the arms of an extraordinary man!

The triumphal reception accorded by the Directory to General Bonaparte was followed by a series of splendid entertainments given in his honour by the directors, the members of the councils, and the ministers. Amidst all these pomps, he preserved his simplicity, being affable though austere, seeming almost insensible to pleasure, and ever seeking out the gifted and the celebrated to converse apart of the art or science which they illustrated.

The information of the young general scarcely exceeded that of an officer recently emerged from the military college. Yet with the inspiration of genius he was able to discourse upon topics the most strange to him, and to throw out those occasional bold, but original suggestions which are often the mere impertinences of ignorance, but which, coming from superior minds and expressed in their emphatic style, create illusions and deceive even professors themselves. This facility of treating all subjects was observed with surprise. The journals, which sought with avidity the minutest details regarding his person and movements, reporting daily in what house he had dined and what disposition he had shown, whether he was sad or cheerful, made special observation that when dining with François (de Neufchâteau) he had talked of mathematics with Lagrange and Laplace, of metaphysics with Sieyès, of poetry with Chénier, of legislation and law with Daunou.

He had dazzled masses by his glory; he now began to conquer, one by one, the principal men in France by personal intercourse. Admiration,

previously excessive, became almost infatuation after he had been seen. Everything about him, even to those marks of a foreign origin which time had not yet effaced in him, contributed to effect. Singularity always adds to the prestige of genius, especially in France, where, with the greatest uniformity of manners, oddity is strangely idolised. Bonaparte affected to shun the crowd and hide himself from the public gaze. He sometimes even resented extravagant proofs of enthusiasm.

Madame de Staël, who adored, as she had reason, grandeur, genius, and glory, evinced a lively impatience to encounter Bonaparte and pour forth her homage. To his imperious character, disposed to repress undue assumptions, it was offensive that she seemed to transgress the female province; he found her too spiritual and of too exalted aspirations; he detected perhaps her independence peering through her admiration; at all events he was cold, repellent, unjust to her. She asked him one day, somewhat abruptly, who in his estimation was the greatest woman; he answered harshly, "she who has borne the most children." Thus was laid the foundation of that mutual antipathy which entailed on her such unmerited sufferings, and incited him to acts of petty and brutal tyranny. Meanwhile he seldom appeared abroad, but lived secluded in his modest house in the rue Chantereine, the name of which had been changed, the department of Paris having ordered it to be called the rue de la Victoire.

He saw only a few men of learning, Monge, Laplace, Lagrange, and Berthollet; a few generals, Desaix, Kléber, Caffarelli; certain artists, and particularly the celebrated actor, Talma, for whom he ever after manifested a strong predilection. When he left his residence it was usually in a plain vehicle; if he visited the theatre he sat shrouded in a grated box, and appeared to partake of none of the glittering and dissipated tastes of his wife. Nevertheless he exhibited the warmest affection for her; he was enthralled by that enchanting grace which, in private life as on the throne, never forsook Madame Beauharnais, and with her supplied the place of beauty.

A seat having become vacant in the Institute by the banishment of Carnot, it was at once offered to him. He accepted it with alacrity, appeared on the day of his reception between Lagrange and Laplace, and ever after wore on public occasions the costume of a member of the Institute, affecting to conceal the warrior under the garb of science.

The Directory was far from evincing any of the fears it experienced. It received numerous reports from its spies, who frequented taverns and public places to hear the language used respecting Bonaparte; and, according to them, he was soon to place himself at the head of affairs, overturn an enfeebled government, and thus save France from the royalists and Jacobins. The Directory, feigning an excess of candour, showed him these reports, and professed to treat them with contempt, as if it believed the general wholly incapable of ambition. The general, equally dissembling on his part, expressed his gratitude for this frankness, and gave assurances he was worthy of the confidence reposed in him. But, notwithstanding, an indelible distrust prevailed on both sides.

He would not even appear to connect himself with the Directory; he preferred to remain aloof, the speculation of all parties, neither allied nor embroiled with any. The attitude of a censor was one agreeable to his ambition. The part is an easy one to play with regard to a government assailed by factions on opposite sides, and constantly exposed to the risk of dissolution; and it is advantageous, because it attracts all malcontents.

He was too young to be a director; it was requisite to be forty years old, and he was not thirty. A dispensation of age was indeed spoken of, but that involved a concession which would alarm the republicans, give rise to a prodigious outcry, and certainly not repay the annoyances it would occasion. Besides, to take part as a fifth unit in the government, to have simply his vote in the Directory, to weary himself in struggles with councils still independent, offered no attractions to him; the odium of provoking a breach of the laws was not worth incurring for such a result. France had yet a powerful enemy to encounter, England; and, though Bonaparte was covered with glory, the most advisable course for him was to go forth and reap fresh laurels, leaving the government to exhaust itself in its painful struggle with contending parties.

THE PROJECT AGAINST ENGLAND AND EGYPT

On the same day the Treaty of Campo-Formio was ratified at Paris, the Directory, designing to arouse the public mind against England, created an army styled that of England, and gave the command of it to Bonaparte. The government was quite sincere in its intention to take the shortest course with England, and make a descent on her shores. It was not imagined that the British people, with all their patriotism, not having then an adequate land-army, could resist the redoubtable warriors of Italy and the Rhine, and especially the genius of the hero of Castiglione, Arcola, and Rivoli. The hope was still entertained that a breeze would ultimately scatter the English squadron blockading the roads of Cadiz, and that the Spanish fleet might then be able to sail out and join the French. As to the Dutch fleet, which was likewise expected to strengthen the French navy, it had recently suffered a severe check off Texel, and its shattered remains were driven back into the ports of Holland. But the combined French and Spanish squadrons would suffice to cover the passage of a flotilla, and protect the transport of sixty or eighty thousand men into England. To carry out all these designs, some fresh means for raising money were to be devised. From fifteen to twenty millions of subscriptions were at once obtained. At the same time, the Directory levelled against England not only its preparations, but its rigours too. A law existed interdicting the import of English goods; the executive was now armed with authority to make domiciliary visits for the purpose of discovering them, which it caused to be put into force throughout the whole of France on the same day and at the same hour (4th of January, 1798).

Bonaparte seemed to abet this great movement and to give himself to it; but, at heart, he was indisposed towards the enterprise. To land sixty thousand men in England, march on London and occupy it was not in his opinion the chief difficulty. But he felt conscious that to conquer the country and retain possession of it was impossible; it might be ravaged, plundered of much of its wealth, thrown back, annihilated, for half a century; still the invading army must be eventually sacrificed, and he its leader might have to return almost in solitude, after executing a mere barbarous incursion. Later, with a power more gigantic, a greater experience of his means, and an intense personal exasperation against England, he seriously thought of engaging her on her own soil and hazarding his fortune against hers; but at present he had other ideas and other designs.

He turned therefore to a project of another kind, one equally stupendous but more original in design, more productive in its results, more consonant with the temper of his imagination, and above all more prompt of execution.

He had often directed his eyes to Egypt, as the intermediary station France ought to hold between Europe and Asia, in order to monopolise the commerce of the Levant, and possibly that of India. This idea had riveted itself in his imagination and now almost wholly engrossed him. Dim visions of some vast future floated in his fancy. To plunge into those countries of early enlightenment and glory, where Alexander and Mohammed had overthrown and founded empires, to make his name famous in their regions, and have it wafted back to France resounding with the echoes of Asia, formed the phantasmagoria of a delicious reverie.

FRANCE AND HER JUNIOR REPUBLICS

Whilst the republic was thus concentrating all its resources for an attack on England, it had still important interests to arrange on the continent. Its political province was in truth sufficiently ample. It had to treat at Rastatt with the empire, that is to say with the whole extant feudal system, and it had to tutor in their new career three republics, its offspring, to wit, the Batavian, Cisalpine, and Ligurian republics.

The territories occupied by France and the new republics intermingled with those of still feudal Europe, in a manner dangerous to the continuance of peace between the two rival systems. Switzerland, wholly feudal though republican, was enclosed between France, Savoy, now a French province, and the Cisalpine. Piedmont, with which France had contracted an alliance, was enveloped by France, Savoy, the Cisalpine, and the Ligurian. The Cisalpine and the Ligurian republics, again, encompassed the duchies of Parma and Tuscany, and approached near enough to communicate their own excitement to Rome, and even Naples. The Directory, however, had taken the precaution to enjoin upon its agents the strictest reserve, and prohibited them to hold out hopes to the democrats. The intentions of the Directory on the point were sincere and prudent. It desired, doubtless, the progress of the Revolution; but was no longer impelled to accelerate it by arms.

True, all the Italian states were more or less agitated. Arrests were numerous in every city, but the French ministers interposed only by occasional reclamations in favour of individuals unjustly persecuted. In Piedmont, where wholesale incarcerations took place, the intercession of France was often tendered with success. In Tuscany much greater moderation was observed. At Naples a large class of men existed who had embraced the new opinions, against the increase of which a court, equally destitute of morality and sense, strove madly with fetters and punishments. The French ambassador, Trouvé, was loaded with insults. Frenchmen, too, had been assassinated. Even when Bonaparte was in Italy, he had found it difficult to restrain the fury of the court of Naples, and now that the terror of his presence was removed, we may judge of what it was capable. The French government had forces sufficient severely to chastise its offences; but to avoid disturbing the general peace, it instructed Trouvé to observe the utmost forbearance, restrict himself to representations, and endeavour to reclaim it to the dictates of reason.

THE POPE DEPOSED (FEBRUARY, 1798)

The government, however, tottering nearest to its ruin was the papal. Not that it took no pains to defend itself, for it likewise made multitudinous arrests; but an aged pontiff with his spirit quenched, and a few feeble

incompetent cardinals, could with difficulty struggle against the evils of the times. Already, at the instigation of the Cisalpines, the march of Ancona had revolted and formed itself into a republic. Thence the democrats preached rebellion throughout the whole Roman state. The French artists studying at Rome encouraged them by exhortations; but Joseph Bonaparte laboured to restrain them.

They assembled on the 28th of December to commence a revolt. Dispersed by the papal dragoons they sought refuge within the jurisdiction of the French ambassador, under the porticoes of the Corsini palace which he inhabited. Joseph hastened to the scene accompanied by some French officers and General Duphot, a distinguished young soldier of the army of Italy. He attempted to interpose between the papal troops and the insurgents in the hope of preventing a massacre. But the papal soldiery, paying no respect to the ambassador, fired and killed at his side the unfortunate Duphot. Joseph Bonaparte immediately demanded his passports. They were given to him, and he forthwith took his departure for Tuscany.

JOSEPH BONAPARTE
(1768–1844)

Great indignation was manifested in the Cisalpine Republic and by all the Italian patriots against the holy see. The army of Italy demanded with loud shouts to be led against Rome.

Disregarding caution and the inconveniences of a hostile determination, revolutionary zeal prevailed, and the Directory ordered Berthier, who commanded in Italy, to march upon Rome. On the 10th of February, 1798, Berthier arrived in sight of the ancient capital of the world, which the French army had not yet visited. The pope shut himself in the Vatican, and Berthier, introduced by the gate of the People, was escorted to the Capitol, like some old Roman triumpher. The democrats, at the summit of their wishes, assembled in the Campo Vaccino, where the vestiges of the ancient Forum are perceptible, and, surrounded by a stupid populace, ready to applaud any novelty, proclaimed the Roman Republic. The pontiff, treated with all the attentions due to his age and office, was abstracted from the Vatican during the night and conducted into Tuscany, where he found an asylum in a convent. The people of Rome seemed to regret but indifferently the loss of this ruler, who had nevertheless reigned over them upwards of twenty years.

Unfortunately, excesses, not against persons but against property, sullied the entry of the French into the ancient metropolis of the world. There was no longer at the head of the army that stern and inflexible chief, who, less from virtue than an abhorrence of disorder, had so severely punished

plunderers. Bonaparte alone could have bridled cupidity in a country so stocked with riches. Berthier had departed for Paris, and Masséna succeeded him. This general, to whom France owes everlasting gratitude for saving it at Zurich from inevitable ruin, was accused of having set the first example. It was one at all events that found numerous imitators. Palaces, convents, superb collections were mercilessly rifled. Jews, in the train of the army, purchased for insignificant sums magnificent objects recklessly abandoned to them by the depredators. The waste was as revolting as the pillage itself. The soldiers and subalterns were in the most horrible destitution; and they naturally felt indignant at the spectacle of their leaders indecently gorging themselves with spoil and tarnishing the glory of the French name, without any relief or advantage to the army. The Directory recalled him and despatched to Rome a commission, composed of four upright and enlightened individuals, to organise the new republic.

SWITZERLAND REORGANISED (1797-1798 A.D.)

It might seem that Switzerland, the ancient land of liberty, famed for its primitive and pastoral manners, had nothing to learn from France and could have no cause for change. On the contrary, feudalism, which is simply a military hierarchy, prevailed with regard to those republics, and there were communities dependent on other communities, as a vassal on his suzerain, and groaning beneath a yoke of iron. In all the several governments, aristocracy had gradually engrossed the whole of the powers. In every part of Europe Swiss might be found forcibly banished from their country, or seeking in voluntary exile protection from aristocratic outrage. Furthermore, the thirteen cantons, disunited and not seldom opposed to each other, no longer possessed any force, and were quite incapable of defending their independence. Switzerland therefore was nothing now but a romantic recollection and a picturesque region; politically, she presented but one unbroken chain of petty and humiliating tyrannies.

Thus, we may conceive the effect likely to be produced within it by the example of the French Revolution. At Zurich, Bâle, and Geneva, especially, great excitement has been manifested. In the latter city indeed sanguinary tumults had occurred. Although feeling it incumbent to propitiate Germany, Piedmont, Parma, Tuscany, and Naples, the Directory recognised no necessity for the same deference towards Switzerland, and was moreover greatly tempted to promote the establishment of an analogous government in a country justly deemed the military key of Europe. Here also, as in the instance of Rome, the Directory was drawn from its prescribed policy by an irresistible seduction. To replace the Alps in friendly hands constituted a motive equally persuasive with that which incited to the demolition of the papacy.

Consequently, on the 28th of December, 1797, the Directory proclaimed that it took the Vaudois under the protection of France. This sufficed as a signal of insurrection to the Vaudois. The bailiffs of Bern, whose oppression had been long execrated, were expelled, though without ill-treatment; trees of liberty were everywhere reared, and in a few days Vaud constituted itself into the Lemanic Republic. The Directory hastened to recognise it, and authorised General Ménard to occupy it, signifying to the canton of Bern that its independence was guaranteed by France.

In the interim the Bernese aristocrats had collected an army. Brune, who was intrusted with the French command, held some conferences at Payerne, but they proved fruitless, and on the 2nd of March the French troops

moved forward. General Schawembourg, with the division brought from the Rhine, occupied Soleure. Brune, with the Italian division, seized on Fribourg. General d'Erlach, who commanded the Bernese troops, retired. The Bernese troops believed themselves betrayed, and murdered their officers.

Nevertheless there remained with Erlach some of those battalions, distinguished in all the armies of Europe for their discipline and bravery, and a certain number of determined peasants. On the 5th of March, Brune on the Fribourg road, and Schawembourg on that of Soleure, simultaneously attacked the positions of the Swiss army. The Swiss found themselves obliged to retreat, and fell back in disorder on Bern. The French encountered in front of the city a multitude of infatuated and desperate mountaineers. Even women and old men rushed headlong on their bayonets. The soldiers were reluctantly compelled to exterminate these pitiable zealots who sacrificed their lives so uselessly. Bern was eventually entered. The denizens of the Swiss mountains sustained their ancient reputation for valour, but exhibited all the blind and irrational ferocity of an Andalusian horde. They perpetrated a fresh massacre of officers, and assassinated the unfortunate Erlach.

The capture of Bern decided the submission of all the great Swiss cantons. Brune, called, as had befallen so many French generals, to be the founder of a republic, proposed to incorporate the French part of Switzerland, the Lake of Geneva, Vaud, a portion of the canton of Bern, and Valais, into a single republic to be called the Rhodanic. But the Swiss patriots had desired a revolution chiefly in the hope of obtaining two principal advantages: the abolition of all jurisdictions of one people over another, and national unity. They longed to witness the extirpation of all domestic tyrannies, and to mould the whole into a general commonwealth by the institution of a central government. They prevailed that a single republic, the Helvetic, only should be carved out of the various subdivisions of Switzerland.

On entering Bern, the French seized the exchequer of government, which is a usual proceeding and the least contested right in war. All the public property of a vanquished government belongs to the conqueror. In all these petty states, equally parsimonious and extortionate, there were long-hoarded treasures. Bern possessed a small coffer of its own, which has furnished to all the enemies of France a fruitful subject of calumny. It has been represented to contain thirty millions, whereas it held but eight. France is accused of having engaged in the war merely to seize this fund and apply the proceeds in the Egyptian expedition — as if she could have supposed the authorities of Bern would not have the sense to remove it; or as if it were probable she would make war and risk the consequences of such an invasion to gain eight millions.[1] Such absurdities refute themselves. A contribution to defray the maintenance and pay of the troops was levied on the members of the old oligarchies of Bern, Fribourg, Soleure, and Zurich.

The winter of 1797–1798 was drawing rapidly to a close. Five months

[1 This is the estimate of Thiers.[e] Daguet,[f] however, says: "Some historians calculate the sums taken from the treasury of Bern at 26,000,000 livres. Lanfrey[j] estimates what was taken at Bern alone at 41,000,000 (16,000,000 in specie and ingots, 7,000,000 in arms and munitions, 18,000,000 in requisitions). The author of the *Mémoires du Maréschal Ney*[k] computes still higher than Lanfrey, namely at 46,000,000, the total of what was taken at Bern in money, wine, corn, and arms. 'Behold a lesson,' he says, 'for the instruction of those who may be tempted to introduce the foreigner into their native country.' As for Rapinat himself, the French commissioner, he set the total of what was taken from Switzerland at only 13,000,000." Dändliker[l] puts the pillage of public money at over 17,000,000 francs, and Viesseux[m] sets it at over 30,000,000 francs.]

only had elapsed since the Treaty of Campo-Formio, but the situation of Europe had greatly changed in the interval. The republican system had made gigantic strides; to the three republics previously founded by France, two others had been added, created within two months. Europe heard with a shudder the continual echo of the words: Batavian Republic, Helvetic Republic, Cisalpine Republic, Ligurian Republic, Roman Republic. Instead of three governments, France had now five to superintend—involving an additional complication of cares and further explanations for foreign powers. The Directory thus found itself impelled insensibly. There is nothing more insatiable than a system; it creeps onward almost alone, expanding and overcoming even in spite of its authors.

THE ELECTIONS OF 1798

Whilst so many external objects demanded its attention, the domestic subject of the elections likewise forced itself on the anxious notice of the Directory. Since the 18th Fructidor there remained in the councils only such deputies as the Directory had voluntarily left there, and upon whom it could rely. These were they who had either promoted or acquiesced in the *coup d'état*. But a new opposition was forming, composed no longer of royalists but of patriots. One of Bonaparte's brothers, Lucien, elected by Corsica to the Five Hundred, had planted himself in this constitutional opposition, not from any cause of personal pique, but that he imitated his brother, and assumed the office of censor of the government. It was the attitude which suited a family that aspired to take a position apart. Lucien was a man of ability, and endowed with an eminent talent for the tribune. He there produced considerable effect, recommended as he was by the glory of his brother. Joseph too, since his retreat from Rome, had returned to Paris, where he maintained a large establishment, and dispensed a generous hospitality to generals, deputies, and distinguished men. The two brothers, Joseph and Lucien, were thus in a capacity to effect many things, which propriety and his studied reserve prohibited to the general.[c]

THE EXPEDITION TO EGYPT

Meanwhile Napoleon had proposed his Egyptian schemes to the Directory, which had received them with enthusiasm. The expedition was instantly set on foot. Bonaparte reached Toulon on the morning of the 9th of May and immediately reviewed his new army recruited almost entirely from the invincible soldiers of the army of Italy. In a vigorous address he recalled to them the wretched state he had found them in when, two years before, he had put himself at their head, and also the measure of comfort they had enjoyed under his command. Then he pointed out the riches of Italy with which his subordinates had gorged themselves. Now he promised that each man on his return would possess means enough to buy eight acres of land. At this shameless appeal to their cupidity, the soldiers replied with the cry, "Long live the immortal republic!" repeated a thousand times, as if to guarantee that they were ready to fight again for an idea. This address, which is of incontestible authenticity, appeared in all the leading journals of the time. The Directory, disgusted with the general's plain speaking, ordered its suppression. The public papers published a more dignified address, one in which there was none of that incitement to greed, so artfully introduced to obliterate the moral tone and destroy the belief in generous impulses.

The squadron, under the command of Admiral Brueys, with the convoy in its charge, set sail on the 19th of May. The entire fleet carried about forty thousand soldiers and ten thousand sailors. It sailed direct for Malta, which Bonaparte on his own authority had determined to capture *en route*. The republic was at peace with the knights of this island. But given the intention for war, the pretext comes easily enough to hand, and no difficulty was found in manufacturing one on the spot. The knights of Malta were charged with creating a state of war between themselves and the republic ever since 1793 by harbouring émigrés. On the evening of the 21st Prairial (June 9th) the squadron hove in sight of Malta.

Bonaparte landed some portions of his troops and immediately opened a furious cannonade on the town of Valetta. The knights made but a feeble defence. This conquest of such very questionable morality cost the French army forty-eight hours of attack and three men. This is cheap glory. Napoleon departed on the 19th of June. Eleven days later Alexandria was in sight. On the next day he received the French consul at Alexandria on board his flagship. He learned from him that fourteen English ships had sailed within half a league of the town the day before; that Nelson, who was in command of them, had inquired of the English consul news of the whereabouts of the French fleet, on whose pursuit he was bent since leaving Toulon; and, further, that he had withdrawn in the direction of the Dardanelles. Nelson might return at any time—not a moment must be lost. The disembarkation was carried out in the middle of the night. As soon as he had some few thousand men ashore Bonaparte divided them into three columns, the command of which he gave to Menou, Bon, and Kléber. He then marched direct upon Alexandria, which surrendered after a defence of a few hours.

JOACHIM MURAT
(1771–1815)

Bonaparte had with great foresight taken pains to let the inhabitants know of his firm resolve to respect their property, manners, customs, and religion. He even boasted of having destroyed the power of the pope, the old enemy of the Mussulmans. It was, he said, only against the mameluke, not against the porte and its subjects, that he made war. This proclamation, false in many respects, produced the best results. The French immediately took possession.

Egypt was at that time in the hands of Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey, who had almost shaken off their dependence on the porte. It was at Cairo that a blow must be struck at the heart of their power. Bonaparte determined to strike precipitately and after having left three thousand men at Alexandria under the command of Kléber, who had been wounded in the forehead by a ball during the attack on that town, he marched on the 6th of July, taking generals Desaix, Lannes, and Murat with him.[a]

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S ACCOUNT OF THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION

Their course was up the Nile, and a small flotilla of gunboats ascended the river to protect their right flank, while the infantry traversed a desert of burning sands, at a distance from the stream, and without a drop of water to relieve their tormenting thirst. The army of Italy, accustomed to the enjoyments of that delicious country, were astonished at the desolation they saw around them.

To add to their embarrassment, the enemy began to appear. Mamelukes and Arabs, concealed behind the hillocks of sand, interrupted their march at every opportunity, and woe to the soldier who straggled from the ranks, were it but fifty yards! Some of these horsemen were sure to dash at him, slay him on the spot, and make off before a musket could be discharged at them. At length, however, the audacity of these incursions was checked by a skirmish of some little importance, near a place called Chehrheis, in which the French asserted their military superiority. An encounter also took place on the river, between the French flotilla and a number of armed vessels belonging to the mamelukes. Victory first inclined to the latter, but at length determined in favour of the French, who took, however, only a single galliot.

Meanwhile, the French were obliged to march with the utmost precaution. The whole plain was now covered with mamelukes, mounted on the finest Arabian horses, and armed with pistols, carbines, and blunderbusses, of the best English workmanship — their plumed turbans waving in the air, and their rich dresses and arms glittering in the sun. The French were soon reconciled to fighting the mamelukes, when they discovered that each of these horsemen carried about him his fortune, and that it not uncommonly amounted to considerable sums in gold. During these alarms, the French love of the ludicrous was not abated by the fatigues or dangers of the journey.

After fourteen days of such marches they arrived within six leagues of Cairo, and beheld at a distance the celebrated Pyramids, but learned, at the same time, that Murad Bey, with twenty-two of his brethren, at the head of their mamelukes, had formed an entrenched camp at a place called Embabeh, with the purpose of covering Cairo and giving battle to the French. On the 21st of July, as the French continued to advance, they saw their enemy in the field, and in full force. A splendid line of cavalry, under Murad and the other beys, displayed the whole strength of the mamelukes. Their right rested on the imperfectly entrenched camp, in which lay twenty thousand infantry, defended by forty pieces of cannon. But the infantry were an undisciplined rabble; the guns, wanting carriages, were mounted on clumsy wooden frames; and the fortifications of the camp were but commenced, and presented no formidable opposition. Bonaparte made his dispositions. He extended his line to the right, in such a manner as to keep out of gunshot of the entrenched camp, and have only to encounter the line of cavalry.

Murad Bey saw this movement, and, fully aware of its consequence, prepared to charge with his magnificent body of horse, declaring he would cut the French up like gourds. Bonaparte, as he directed the infantry to form squares to receive them, called out to his men, "From yonder Pyramids twenty centuries behold your actions." The mamelukes advanced with the utmost speed, and corresponding fury, and charged with horrible yells. They disordered one of the French squares of infantry, which would have been sabred in an instant, but that the mass of this fiery militia was a little behind the advanced guard. The French had a moment to restore order, and used it. The combat then in some degree resembled that which, nearly twenty years afterwards, took place at Waterloo; the hostile cavalry furiously charging the squares of infantry, and trying, by the most undaunted efforts of courage, to break in upon them at every practicable point, while a tremendous fire of musketry, grape-shot, and shells, crossing in various directions, repaid their audacity. Nothing in war was ever seen more desperate than the exertions of the mamelukes. Failing to force their horses through the French squares, individuals were seen to wheel them round, and rein them back on the ranks, that they might disorder them by kicking. As they became frantic with despair, they hurled at the immovable phalanxes, which they could not break, their pistols, their poniards, and their carbines. Those who fell wounded to the ground dragged themselves on, to cut at the legs of the French with their crooked sabres. But their efforts were all in vain.

The mamelukes, after the most courageous efforts to accomplish their purpose, were finally beaten off with great slaughter; and as they could not form or act in squadron, their retreat became a confused flight. The greater part attempted to return to their camp, from that sort of instinct, as Napoleon termed it, which leads fugitives to retire in the same direction in which they advanced. By taking this route they placed themselves betwixt the French and the Nile; and the sustained and insupportable fire of the former soon obliged them to plunge into the river, in hopes to escape by swimming to the opposite bank — a desperate effort, in which few succeeded. Their infantry at the same time evacuated their camp without a show of resistance, precipitated themselves into the boats, and endeavoured to cross the Nile. Very many of these also were destroyed. The French soldiers long afterwards occupied themselves in fishing for the drowned mamelukes, and failed not to find money and valuables upon all whom they could recover. Murad Bey, with a part of his best mamelukes, escaped the slaughter by a more regular movement to the left, and retreated by Gizeh into Upper Egypt.

Thus were in a great measure destroyed the finest cavalry, considered as individual horsemen, that were ever known to exist. "Could I have united the mameluke horse to the French infantry," said Bonaparte, "I should have reckoned myself master of the world." The destruction of a body hitherto regarded as invincible struck terror, not through Egypt only, but far into Africa and Asia, wherever the Moslem religion prevailed; and the rolling fire of musketry by which the victory was achieved procured for Bonaparte the oriental appellation of "Sultan of fire."

After this combat, which, to render it more striking to the Parisians, Bonaparte termed the "battle of the Pyramids," Cairo surrendered without resistance. The shattered remains of the mamelukes who had swum the Nile were compelled to retreat into Syria. Lower Egypt was completely in the hands of the French, and thus far the expedition of Bonaparte had been perfectly successful.*p*

FRENCH ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF THE NILE

It was just as well that the general had, by his rapid victories, so firmly established himself in Egypt, for on returning to Cairo he learned through an aide-de-camp of General Kléber that all retirement from it was for the moment impossible. The French had just experienced a terrible naval

disaster. After the disembarkation of Bonaparte's troops, Admiral Brueys had brought up his fleet at the mouth of the Nile along the islet of Abukir. But instead of securing himself in the harbour, he was content to keep his fleet in the roadstead, not thinking that the enemy would dare to push his fleet in between him and the island. This however is what happened. On the evening of the 14th Thermidor (August 1st), Nelson's entire fleet hove in sight. By a daring manœuvre a part of the English ships slipped in between Abukir and the French ships, which were thus taken between two fires. A furious and terrible engagement followed, during the night. Admiral Brueys in the *Orient*, a magnificent ship of one hundred and fifty guns, fought desperately. He was even on the point of taking the *Bellerophon*, one of the chief English ships, with which the *Orient* was engaged hand to hand, when he was cut in two by a shot and his vessel, burning with an inextinguishable fire, was blown up with a fearful noise. It was then a little after 10 o'clock at night.

A division of the French fleet under the command of Vice-Admiral Villeneuve had not seen the signal to engage. If at this moment he had fallen into line with all his vessels intact, fortune might have decided in favour of the French, as the English fleet was severely mauled. But instead the vice-admiral slipped his cables and sailed into the open. The French were compelled to succumb to numbers. The *Artemis*, the *Franklin*, the *Sovereign People*, and the *Tonnant* fought to the last extremity. The captain of the *Tonnant*, Dupetit-Thouars, cut through both thighs, still urged his men to resist. The battle ended from exhaustion.

All the French ships were taken, sunk, or put out of action. The victor was almost as roughly handled. Nelson, carrying off from seven to eight thousand French seamen as prisoners, was obliged to take refuge in a Neapolitan port to repair his fleet. That victory, so dearly bought, gave him an immense reputation. He was made Baron Nelson of the Nile. This was one of the most decisive results of the Egyptian expedition.

Bonaparte received the news with stoic fortitude. "Perhaps," he said, "the English will compel me to carry out greater undertakings than I contemplated." He confided to one of the savants accompanying him — to Volney in fact — a few of his great projected enterprises. Since Turkey had declared war on the French, it would be at Constantinople, which he would reach through Asia, that he would strike a blow at the English. Once there, he saw himself master of Europe, liberating Poland, holding Russia in check, subduing Austria, and forbidding England to enter the Mediterranean. At that time, and Volney must have known it, Bonaparte's ambition had grown into a mania. Seeing a probability of receiving no reinforcements from France for some time to come, he recruited soldiers in the country itself.

In order to stand well with the inhabitants he adapted himself to their customs, while imposing some of his own on them. He modified their laws, established schools, repaired roads, desert tracks, and canals, besides marrying his soldiers to the young Egyptian women.[1] His soldiers fell easily into

[1 Compare the similar acts of Alexander the Great in Persia. Crowe says: "He was scrupulous in the distribution of justice — resistless. But he sought to obtain a still stronger hold on their imagination, by passing for a prophet, or heaven-sent conqueror. A similar idea had inspired Robespierre in France: that of Bonaparte proved as unsuccessful, and only served to mark his extravagant ambition, as well as that want or defiance of all principle which characterised his nation and age.

"Madame de Staël called Napoleon a Robespierre on horseback. Never was truth more full and poignant: the utterance of it was more galling than all the despot's decrees of exile in return."]

the new circumstances; they led a free and easy life, and, amidst the pleasures offered by the city of Cairo, soon forgot the cares of the mother-country.

Nevertheless a formidable sedition broke out in Cairo (October 21st). General Dupuy was the first victim. A number of Frenchmen perished with him. The suppression was horrible, savage, and merciless. Formed in column, the troops hurled themselves on the rebels and made a veritable butchery of them. Bonaparte gave orders that all armed inhabitants found in the streets should be killed. The insurgents did not delay in a speedy submission, though more than five thousand of their number were lost.

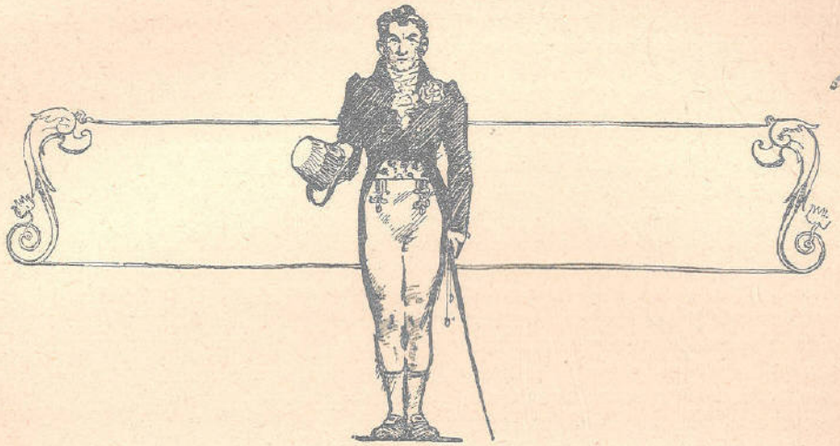
The clemency of the conqueror has been much praised. Here we have a sample of it. For a fixed period, thirty prisoners were executed daily. The intention was to terrify the people. One morning, the French troops led a herd of donkeys heavily laden with sacks on to the place de Caire. There was an enormous crowd present, curious to know what the sacks contained. The soldiers opened them all simultaneously and hundreds of heads rolled out. Neither Fouché nor Carrier had ever conceived such a thing as this. And what had been the crime of these wretches? A wish to free their country, invaded and down-trodden by the foreigner. It is quite certain that the black inhabitants of the desert would form but an indifferent opinion of European civilisation."

THIERS ON THE RESULTS OF THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION

The celebrated naval battle of Abukir or the Nile was the most disastrous that the French navy had ever sustained and its military consequences threatened to be most fatal. Tidings of the misfortune rapidly circulated through Egypt, and caused a moment of despair to the army. Bonaparte received the intelligence with imperturbable calmness. "So be it!" he cried; "we must die here, or issue forth great as the ancients." Bonaparte sought to distract his soldiers by different expeditions, and soon taught them to forget the disaster. At the *fête* of the foundation of the republic, celebrated on the 1st Vendémiaire [September 22nd] he strove to exalt their imagination; he caused to be engraved on Pompey's pillar the names of the forty soldiers first killed in Egypt. These were the forty who had fallen in the assault of Alexandria. Their names, furnished from the obscure villages of France, were thus associated with the immortality of Pompey and Alexander. He likewise addressed to his army a grand and thrilling allocution, retracing its wondrous history. It ran thus:

"SOLDIERS:

"We celebrate the first day of the year VII of the republic. Five years ago the independence of the French people was menaced; but you took Toulon; it was the presage of the ruin of your enemies. A year after you beat the Austrians at Dego. The year subsequent you were on the summit of the Alps. Two years ago you fought against Mantua, and won the famous victory of San Giorgio. Last year you were at the sources of the Drave and the Isonzo, on your return from Germany. Who would then have said that you would this day be on the banks of the Nile, in the centre of the ancient world? From the English, renowned in arts and commerce, to the hideous and ferocious Bedouin, you attract the eyes of all nations. Soldiers, your destiny is glorious, because you are worthy of what you have done and of the opinion entertained of you. You will die with honour, like the brave men whose names are written on this column, or you will return to your country covered with laurels, and the admiration of the universe. During the five months we have been absent from Europe, we have been the constant object of solicitude to our countrymen. On this day forty millions of citizens celebrate the era of representative governments; forty millions of citizens think of you; all say, 'It is to their labours, to their blood, that we owe general peace, tranquillity, the prosperity of commerce, and the blessings of civil liberty.'"



CHAPTER XVI

THE COLLAPSE OF THE DIRECTORY

[1798–1799 A.D.]

The cannon of Nelson, which destroyed the French fleet at Abukir, re-echoed from one end of Europe to the other, and everywhere revived the spirit of resistance to the ambition of the republic. That great event not only destroyed the charm of her invincibility, but relieved the allies from the dread arising from the military talents of Napoleon and his terrible Italian army, whom it seemed permanently to sever from Europe. The subjugation of Switzerland and the conquest of Italy were no longer looked upon with mere secret apprehension; they became the subject of loud and impassioned complaint over all Europe; and the allied sovereigns, upon this auspicious event, determined to engage in open preparations for the resumption of hostilities. — ALISON.[b]

THE battle of Abukir robbed the French of all their ascendency in the Levant, and transferred to England a decisive predominance. The porte solemnly declared war against France, September 4th, 1798, and coalesced with Russia and England. The sultan ordered the formation of an army for the reconquest of Egypt. This event rendered the situation of the French extremely critical. Separated from France, and cut off from succour by the victorious fleets of England, they were exposed to the attacks of all the ferocious hordes of the East. They were but thirty thousand to contend against such perils.

It began to be insinuated that the success of Nelson ought to be the signal for a general rising — that the powers of Europe ought to take advantage of the moment when the most formidable army of France and her greatest captain were imprisoned in Egypt, to march against her and repel within her own confines her soldiers and her principles. Such suggestions soon became rife in all the courts. This was the moment, they were told, to second the court of Naples, to league together against the common enemy,

to rise all at once upon the rear of the French, and exterminate them from one end of the peninsula to the other. Austria was urged that she ought to seize the moment when the Italian states took the French in rear to attack them in front, and wrest Italy from their possession. The thing would be of easy accomplishment, she was reminded, for Bonaparte and his terrible army were no longer on the Adige. The empire was incited by the remembrance of the territory it had lost, and of the compulsory cession of the limit of the Rhine. Urgent but vain endeavours were made to draw Prussia from her neutrality; and lastly, with Paul of Russia, influences were used to decide him to grant the assistance so long and idly promised by his predecessor Catherine.[c]

The winter of 1798–1799 was spent in preparations; but the court of Naples, elated by the victory and presence of Nelson, could not restrain its enthusiasm until spring, and commenced war by advancing upon Rome in the month of December. The French, few in number, under Championnet, retreated to the mountains behind Soracte. Mack, the Austrian general, commanding the Neapolitans, followed them, and was soon defeated by a soldier of the school of Bonaparte. The Neapolitan army evacuated not only Rome, but fled, without making a stand, back to their own capital. Capua, a town most capable of resistance, and defended by a rapid stream, surrendered without firing a shot; and the royal family abandoned Naples. The lazzaroni, unsupported and uncommanded, held out for several days against the French, and would certainly have succeeded in repelling them altogether, had a prince or general of spirit and authority remained amongst them; but the pusillanimity of the Bourbon race was everywhere alike unredeemed by a single trait of firmness or valour.

Naples now became the Parthenopean Republic, January 23rd, 1799; while, to complete the conquest of Italy, the king of Piedmont, the earliest ally of the French Republic, was hurled from his throne, December 9th, 1798. The Directory despatched an officer to take possession of Turin, and to garrison it. "France," says Thiers,[c] "had the same right to overthrow the court of Piedmont, as the garrison of a fortress has to destroy the buildings that obstruct its defence." In virtue of this martial law, the king was forced to abdicate, and was exiled to Sardinia. In merited retribution, this violence and grasping ambition on the part of France turned out to weaken her power. She had occupied and revolutionised provinces and kingdoms; but had not given them that freedom and independence which enables a land to acquire national feeling, and to defend itself.[1] The very revenues of each country

[1 Yet the words of Thiers should be borne in mind: "It is an error to reproach the French Directory with the disorders that prevailed in the allied states. No resolution, however strong, could have obviated the outbreak of passions which disturbed them; and as to the exactions, the prohibition of Bonaparte himself had not succeeded to prevent them in the conquered provinces. What a single individual, powerful in genius and vigour and on the spot, could not effect, was much less possible to a government composed of five members and seated at a great distance. Still, the majority of the Directory was animated with the purest zeal to promote the welfare of the new republics, and viewed with lively indignation the insolence and extortions of the generals, and the palpable robberies of the companies. Excepting Barras, who shared in the profits of these companies and was the patron-saint of all the corruptionists at Milan, the four directors denounced in the strongest terms the proceedings in Italy. Larévellière-Lépeaux especially, whose stern probity was shocked by such atrocities, submitted a plan to the Directory which met its approval. He proposed that a commission should continue to direct the Roman government, and restrain the military authority; that an ambassador be sent to Milan to represent the French government and deprive the staff of all influence; that this ambassador be empowered to make the alterations in the Cisalpine constitution which were needful, such as reducing the number of local divisions, of public functionaries, and of members in the two councils; and that this ambassador have for assistant an administrator capable of organising a system of taxation and responsibility. This plan was adopted." c]

were swallowed up by the rival spoliations of general and proconsul. A provincial force could not anywhere be raised or depended on. The army, the diminished army of France alone, was thus scattered over an immense frontier, extending from the north of Holland to the south of Italy, with Switzerland, no longer neutral, in the midst, whose mountains it became now necessary to defend. Bonaparte was absent from the camp; and Moreau was in disgrace, as moderate and monarchically inclined, whilst the talents and vigour of Carnot no longer guided the operations of the Parisian war-office. Nevertheless, the Directory esteemed themselves, as of old, invincible, and meditated nothing less than a march upon Vienna, although a few thousand troops were all that they could collect upon the Rhine. It was now, by their order, that the famous project of the conscription was presented to the legislature, and passed into a law; so careful were these predecessors of Bonaparte in providing the ample materials of military despotism. The convention had set the example by its requisitions, and its *levée en masse;* but these were temporary expedients to meet a pressing danger.[1] The conscription now voted placed all Frenchmen, from the age of twenty-one to twenty-five, at the disposal of the minister of war. The government instantly put the law in force, to recruit the armies. Jourdan, Bernadotte, Masséna, and Schérer were appointed to commands: this last, whom Bonaparte had superseded as drunken and incapable in 1796, was now reappointed, whilst Moreau was placed in a subordinate station. But such was the will of Barras.

JEAN BAPTISTE JULES BERNADOTTE
(1764–1844)

The new coalition sent an army into the field numbering 300,000 men. The fresh troops of the emperor of Russia made one-fourth of this complement, and were commanded by Suvarov, the conqueror of Praga, the suburb of Warsaw. The Russian general was destined to act in Italy, as a theatre where the courage of the Austrians might be damped by the memory of recent disasters. Hitherto the neutrality of Switzerland had obliged the tide of war to respect and roll on either side of her rocky barrier. But the French had now usurped the country; and as, by a pedantic rule in the military theory of the day, since disproved, the power that possessed the

[1 A few months before (the Directory) had become actually bankrupt. The interest on the debt was two hundred and fifty-eight millions; it paid two-thirds in drafts on the national property which lost five-sixths of their nominal value, the other third was consolidated and inscribed in the ledger of the public debt. The Directory brought the general irritation to a climax. By two tyrannical measures a forced and progressive loan of one hundred millions and the law of hostages against the relatives of the émigrés and former (*ci-devant*) nobles; the latter destroyed the security of 150,000 families. The councils in order to meet the attacks of Europe decreed the law of conscription, which constrained all citizens from twenty to twenty-five to render military service and ordered a levy of 200,000 men. — DURUY.*d* An incident of this period was a small war with the United States, which resulted in provoking the capture of much French commerce by American vessels. An account of this war will be found in the history of the United States.]

mountains and the sources of rivers could easily master the plain at their feet, and the streams traversing them, the prime object of the belligerents was to dispute with each other the higher Alps. With this view, Austria collected two armies in the eastern frontier of Switzerland, in the Tyrol, and amongst the Grisons, who had called for their aid; whilst the archduke Charles, with another in Bavaria, menaced at once the upper Rhine and the Swiss frontier on the north. To oppose these armies, Masséna, early in March, invaded the Grison country, and drove the Austrians from the valley of the Rhine, which he occupied from the Lake of Constance to St. Gotthard. Jourdan, at the same time, advanced against the archduke Charles, and posted his army betwixt the Lake of Constance and the Danube.

FRENCH DISASTERS AND LOSS OF ITALY (1799 A.D.)

Here the first blow was struck. The archduke was more than a match for his old antagonist. He attacked the French, in a weak point of their line, forced it, and compelled Jourdan to retreat. The latter sought to take his revenge at Stockach, March 22nd, 1799. His chief attempt was directed against the archduke's right, and Soult succeeded at first in driving it before him; but, reinforced, it stood its ground. Prince Charles, himself, charged at the head of his cavalry, and after a stubborn contest the French gave way, and suffered a defeat. The army of Jourdan,[1] in consequence, retired behind the Rhine. In Italy, at the same time, Schérer, experienced like success. If the Directory had sought out a commander to act as a foil to Bonaparte on the theatre of that general's exploits, it could not have chosen otherwise. Schérer, instead of passing the Adige, manœuvred with vague intention; was beaten by Kray at Magnano April 5th; and driven back, in a short month's time, to the Oglio and the Adda; where, conscious of his incapacity, he yielded up the command to Moreau. But it was too late for this able general to retrieve the campaign. Suvarov had arrived with his Russians. He forced the passage of the Adda, defeated the French at Cassano April 28th,[2] and, surrounding one of their divisions, compelled it to surrender.

Moreau, however, manœuvred, and took post in the Apennines, to await the coming of Macdonald, who had evacuated Naples and Rome, and was advancing to the aid of his comrades in northern Italy. Macdonald, issuing alone from the mountains, routed the first Austrian corps with which he came in contact, but now found himself on the banks of the Trebbia, in presence of an overwhelming force of Austrians and Russians. Retreat would have been prudent; but Macdonald stood his ground and gave battle to Suvarov. It was renewed for three successive days — the 17th, 18th, and 19th of June; and even the night brought no cessation to the carnage. The Polish legion, under Dombrowski, was here destroyed almost to a man. The French were defeated with great loss [15,000 men], not a general officer escaping without a wound.

THE 30TH PRAIRIAL

Disasters came thick on every side. In Germany and Italy the French had been routed. Even in Switzerland Masséna had abandoned the line of

[1 Jourdan was compelled by illness to relinquish his command to Ernouf, and he yielded later to Masséna.]

[2 "The very same day the court of Vienna stained its honour with an infamous man-hunt. The ministers of France at the congress of Rastatt, where the peace of the empire was being discussed, were assassinated by Austrian hussars." *d*]

the Rhine. An English and Russian army had made good a descent upon Holland. La Vendée and the Chouans showed symptoms of another insurrection. On the Directory fell the blame of these evil fortunes. Every class joined in execrating it: the royalists in silent indignation. The military attributed to the "lawyers," as they called the directors, the weakness and disorganisation of the armies. The patriots declared, with truth, that the government was as imbecile and powerless abroad as it was violent and tyrannical at home. To submit to dictatorial rule, and yet not find in it energy sufficient to repulse the foreign enemy, was disgraceful and insufferable.

The period arrived for new elections. They were universally democratic; but the Directory dared no longer to cancel them. A powerful majority declared against them in the council of Ancients and of the Five Hundred, no longer constitutional and royalist, as in Fructidor, but constitutional and democratic. The lot for quitting the Directory falling on Rewbell, the noted Sieyès was chosen in his place.[1] Successive attacks now took place against the old members and spirit of the government; Barras, however, being excepted — that flexible politician having made his peace with the opposition. The Directory was deprived of its dictatorial power — of its right of suppressing journals; and public opinion, thus regaining its organ, became trebly powerful. The majority of the legislature determined to force the three directors hostile to it to give in their resignations. A commission was appointed, a report demanded of the state of the nation, and menaces of proceeding to extremes went as far as parliamentary vigour would admit. The old directors, supported by Larévellière-Lépeaux, remained obstinate. They invoked the constitution, and their inviolability thereby decreed; but the answer was prompt and apt. They had violated the constitution to support themselves in Fructidor. On similar grounds of expediency, it might be violated to their prejudice: they were forced to resign. Ducos, Moulins, and Gohier were appointed in their place. The last two were democrats attached to the directorial system, but they became ciphers.*f*

With the dismissal of the directors all the ministers resigned. Thus one saw disappear from the political arena Talleyrand, Schérer, François de Neufchâteau, and Ramel, all the members of the directorial ministry. The change was absolute; Barras alone was left of the old Directory.

This is what is now called the 30th Prairial, a peaceful day, which nevertheless, was a revolution of men and ideas. The populace was so accustomed to changes that it took no notice. What did any movement in the Directory matter to it? Thus one notices a complete progressive degeneration in the energy of the Revolution. Under the convention nothing was done without legislative proscription and the scaffold; on the 9th Thermidor there were more executions of exiles; on the 14th Vendémiaire cannon

[1 Abbé Sieyès, while envoy of the French Republic, had made a reputation of some importance amongst the statesmen of Europe. In intimate consultation with him, the Russian cabinet, while justifying and declaring its intention of maintaining complete neutrality, had spoken overtly on the little consistency to be found in French politics so incessantly disturbed. How treat with regularity so mobile a system which offered neither stability nor duration? What alliance was to be made with an authority subject to change every three months? Abbé Sieyès acquiesced in these opinions and answered that, like them, he was for unity; monarchy in one form or another appeared to him the system most in keeping with the manners and customs of France. Abbé Sieyès repeated his favourite project, the elevation of a prince of the house of Brunswick to the position of constitutional king of France, or as protector of the nation, a necessary transitional concession to the members of the two councils who in their daily sittings vowed hatred of kings. Such conferences were repeated with much interest several times in Berlin. Full of such ideas, Abbé Sieyès had returned to Paris. — CAPEFIGUE.*h*]

resounded in the bloody streets of Paris; on the 18th Fructidor there was wholesale transportation and during the 30th Prairial all was carried out by ballot and majority vote. The deterioration of the revolutionary principle is visible here. A new epoch approaches out of the need of strong government. It will succeed and receive the heritage of those small characters who are contending for authority; the 30th Prairial is a preparation for the 18th Brumaire, a formula of constitution is alone needed to end the republic which is wasting away in the arms of the Directory.*h*

A new administration always endeavours to signalise itself by vigour; and the present, possessed of the legislative majority, were not checked by the extravagance of the measures which they proposed. A forced loan, an extension of the conscription law, filled at once the armies and the coffers of the state, whilst the law of hostages, rendering all the nobles of a province answerable for its tranquillity, compelled them to exert themselves to put down insurrection. Barras redoubled his zeal in his peculiar department, the police; he appointed his creature Fouché, to preside over it. To the discernment of Barras, France owes the advancement of Bonaparte, Talleyrand, and Fouché: the three names tell sufficiently his discernment.

THE BATTLE OF NOVI

The young Joubert, in whom the Directory hoped to raise a rival to Bonaparte, was now commissioned to take the command in Italy against Suvarov. Like the general whom he sought to emulate, his marriage was simultaneous with and accessory to his appointment. "To conquer or perish," was his parting promise to his young bride. He crossed the Alps with reinforcements, rallying the remains of Moreau's and Macdonald's force. But he was still far inferior in number to Suvarov; to whom Mantua, and all the fortresses of southern Italy, had already surrendered. Joubert, however, bent more on acting a heroic part than anxious to defend his country, gave the Russian general battle at Novi.[1] It was fought on the 15th of August with obstinacy and slaughter, but with little skill on either side. Suvarov, with superior forces, attacked on every point. Joubert advanced to the front, to support and encourage his men, when a ball struck him to the heart. His dying word bade his soldiers advance, but in vain. Moreau again resumed the command, and only succeeded in bringing off a defeated and shattered army. Thus Italy was lost in the campaign of a few months.*f*

[1 The Austro-Russians were sixty thousand strong, the French army not half that number; but it fought for the sacred cause of liberty and for the republic, which doubled its strength; and it threw itself furiously, head down, upon the legions of Austria and Russia. The fight lasted until nearly eleven, and then, crushed, harassed, overwhelmed by numbers, the French were obliged to yield ground, leaving behind some standards and thirty-seven pieces of artillery. They had lost about five thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners; the Austro-Russians had lost nearly twenty thousand. Historians, on the strength of the known false calculations of the royalist Jomini, who only attribute to the allied army a loss equal to that of the French, contradict themselves by asserting that the Austro-Russians were so impaired and broken that they were incapable of any movement on the following day. It would very surely have been otherwise had not their losses been much greater; they would not have allowed their enemy to reorganise themselves in the passes of the Alps preparatory to again taking the offensive. The defeat of the French in demoralising the enemy, partook of all the results of a victory. A few more of such successes and the Austro-Russians would have been exterminated.

The death of Joubert did not lessen public grief, it gave events a more gloomy appearance on the surface than was in reality the case. The newest, purest and most popular glories disappeared one after another, carried away by a sort of fatality as if to clear the ground for the appearance of the fated genius of Bonaparte. After Marceau, Hoche; after Hoche, Joubert. And these were they whom it had become a habit to look upon not only as defenders of the nation but of justice, right, and liberty. Joubert had a gorgeous entombment in the hearts of all patriots. — HAMEL.*e*]

THE FRENCH DEFEAT THE ENGLISH IN HOLLAND

While in upper Italy the soldiers of the French army showed a bold front to the enemy, and in Switzerland General Lecourbe continually harassed the Austrians and beat them in twenty engagements, a signal success was achieved over the English in Holland. The northern army was there commanded by General Brune, a former printer, zealous member of the cordeliers, and a friend of Camille Desmoulins. He had twenty-five thousand men under his orders, including the contingent furnished by the Batavian Republic, all ready to hurl the English into the sea should they disembark.

This opportunity did not fail. Towards the end of August the English under the duke of York disembarked some twenty thousand men, and immediately effected a junction with a Russian army corps under the command of General Hermann. This allied army was about forty thousand strong. Brune fell upon the Anglo-Russians before they had time to collect themselves. After beating them in several successive encounters he administered a sanguinary defeat upon them near Bergen-op-Zoom on the 19th of September. Two thousand prisoners, more than three thousand dead and wounded, twenty-five pieces of artillery and five standards, were the results of that memorable day which cost the French scarcely a thing and which was the prelude to a treaty of which we shall speak later on.

While the republic was inwardly given over to these wretched intrigues, it was again outwardly taking the ascendant which it had lost in a moment, and astounding Europe again with the promptness and importance of its actions. Brune in Holland had, after the battle at Bergen, effected a retrograde movement to draw the enemy into a position so formidable that he could there administer to him an irreparable defeat. The allies fell into the trap. Encouraged by a partial success in an affair of outposts the duke of York advanced on the 6th of October to hurl himself against the trenches at Kastrikum. The fight lasted twelve hours. At the end of the day the Anglo-Russians fled in all directions towards the sea, leaving on the field a multitude of dead and abandoning more than fifteen hundred prisoners, eleven pieces of artillery, all their ammunition and baggage. As Brune had foreseen, it was an irreparable defeat. The allied army, harassed, closely pursued, would have infallibly been hurled into the sea if the duke of York, seeing inevitable ruin ahead, had not asked to capitulate. An agreement was signed at Alkmaar by which the duke of York was compelled to re-embark with all his troops, after restoring all French or Batavian prisoners. Thus ended miserably the expedition upon which England had built such great hopes.[1] General Brune had gained his object without being obliged to exterminate an enemy who begged for mercy. Holland was henceforward purged of all Russian or English troops and the republic had regained all its former prestige.

RENEWAL OF FRENCH VICTORY

In Italy the affairs of France had not been slow to re-establish themselves. After the death of Joubert and the sanguinary fight at Novi, where,

[1 The English, however, gained as usual important triumphs on the sea, as will be described in the history of England, the victories including the acquisition of the entire Dutch fleet in the Texel, the capture of a French expedition to Ireland, the capture of Minorca and the blockade of Malta, the death in India of France's friend Tippoo Sahib, and the general control of the waters.]

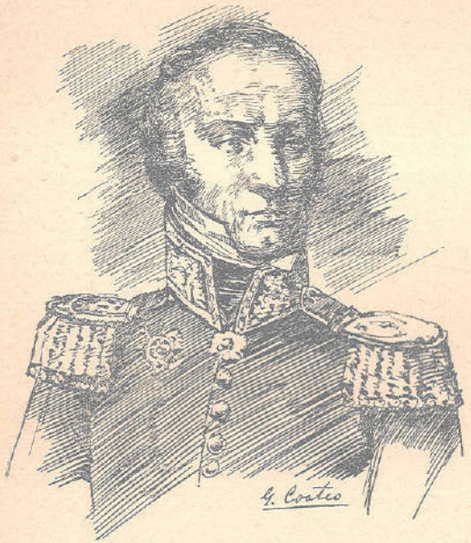
conquered, the French had appeared stronger than the conquerors, Moreau had maintained the defensive without trouble. Recalled to Paris at the end of Vendémiaire he had given up the command to Championnet who now found the army of the Alps and that of Italy under his command. Championnet at once took the offensive, and, in a series of engagements of utmost importance from a moral point of view, in a few days brought victory once more to his folds. But where the triumph of French arms was glorious and prodigious of results was in Switzerland. Archduke Charles had received orders from the Aulic council to retire before Masséna and to take again a position on the Rhine. He effected this move with great rapidity. September 18th he was before Mannheim at the head of thirty thousand men. At daybreak he attacked the French trenches with his whole force. The republicans were only five thousand strong, commanded by Laroche and Ney; they were compelled to give way after a frightful combat in which the enemy's losses were three times as heavy as the French. During this time Suvarov, considerably weakened by his disastrous victory at Novi, was advancing towards Switzerland, which the Austrian court had forbidden him to enter, in order to put the army in Helvetia between two fires; Masséna having made the mistake of allowing Archduke Charles to withdraw unassailed. Another Russian army under the command of General Korsakov was operating in the same way in Switzerland. It was necessary that the French should win at all hazards, otherwise the whole of their eastern frontier would be at the mercy of the enemy.

Masséna fully grasped the gravity of the situation. He had an inspiration of genius. Realising the necessity of destroying Korsakov's army before Suvarov could cross the Alps, he turned rapidly to meet it, and accomplished this on the morning of September 25th on the shore of the Linth. The Austro-Russians occupied the town of Zurich which bestrides the two banks of the river. Three Russian regiments which contested the passage of the Linth were completely exterminated. The evening of that first day the French were masters of the entire right shore of the Lake of Zurich. This was a considerable achievement in itself, but victory was incomplete so long as the enemy occupied the town, and it was necessary to dislodge him quickly as Condé's army and a considerable corps of Bavarians were advancing to his assistance.

The battle was resumed on the morrow with redoubled fury. The town of Zurich was enveloped in a circle of fire; hand-to-hand fighting took place in the streets; there was a fearful slaughter. The Russians allowed themselves to be killed with astonishing impassiveness. Korsakov's rout was complete by evening, and the ruins of his army fled in disorder towards the Rhine. Those two bloody days cost the Russians 8,000 in killed, 7,000 in wounded, and 5,000 prisoners — 20,000 in all. Moreover they left in French hands 6 standards and about 150 cannon. It was an overwhelming disaster.

And yet all was not over. Suvarov was advancing; Masséna wrote to the Directory: "Suvarov arrives; I am going to conquer him." He conquered him to some purpose. Harassed by the troops of Gudin and Lecourbe, Suvarov's army had already lost heavily when, on the 8th Vendémiaire (September 30th), it debouched into the valley of Muthenthal, where it encountered the main body of the French. The Russians, already worn with fatigue, were overthrown, cut to pieces, and obliged to precipitately gain the banks of the Rhine, after suffering frightful loss. Masséna then thought of meeting Korsakov, who seemed to meditate a fresh offensive move on the

Thur. October 7th one of his divisions met, on the Bussingen side, General Korsakov marching at the head of about twelve thousand men, Russians and Bavarians. The action, opening with extraordinary vigour, was not of long duration. The allies were soon compelled to seek safety in flight after leaving a great number of their men on the field. On the same day General Gazan attacked a large corps of Russians and émigrés commanded by Condé in person, before Constance. Impetuously charged upon, Condé's army recoiled in disorder, and sought refuge in the town, which the republicans entered pell-mell with them. Fighting took place in the streets until ten o'clock at night. Nearly all the émigrés were taken or killed. The prince of Condé and his grandson, the duke d'Enghien, escaped only under cover of night. The enemy's losses in these simultaneous encounters amounted to nearly six thousand men. It was the last act of that great battle of Zurich, which had lasted fifteen days. The results were immense. In that memorable fortnight the Austro-Russians had been entirely destroyed or dispersed, Helvetia had been freed, the French frontiers entirely disencumbered, and Archduke Charles reduced to impotence. At that battle of Zurich, which immortalised the name of Masséna, numbers of officers destined to give lustre to the imperial régime distinguished themselves — Soult, Mortier, Gudin, Molitor, Oudinot, and the commandant of artillery, Foy, who later on was to engage in yet greater combats.



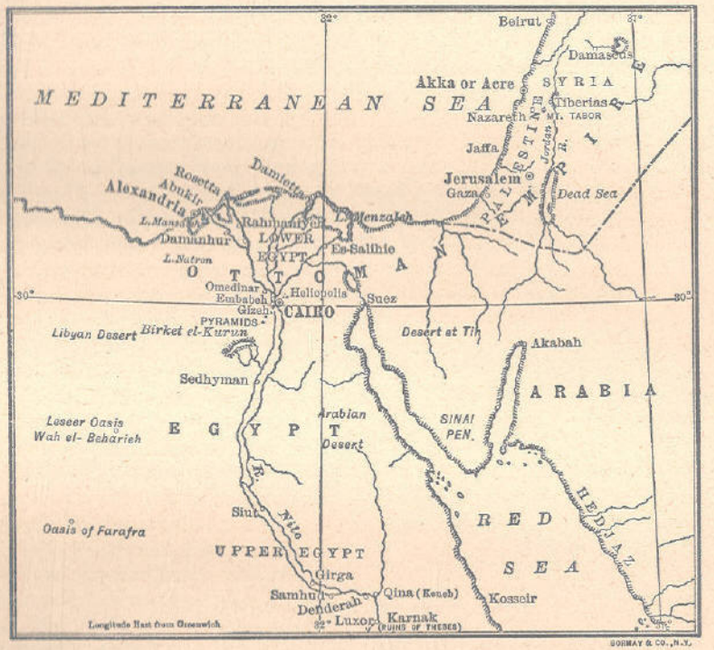
MAXIMILIEN SÉBASTIEN FOY
(1775–1825)

These actions took place towards the close of September, whilst Suvarov was forcing the passage of Mount St. Gotthard. He hoped to come on the flank of the French, whilst they were pressed in front; but when Suvarov arrived in the valley, his allies were repulsed, and he himself was in imminent jeopardy. Accustomed to victory, he was now compelled to retreat, even ere he could fight — and such a retreat! — for which shepherd's tracks over the highest ranges of Alps offered the only passage. Masséna had scarcely need of firing a gun. The march and its privations diminished the army of Suvarov as much as the battle of Zurich had lessened that of Korsakov. Often the Russian soldiers refused to advance through these stupendous and frigid regions; the general would then cause a pit to be dug, fling himself into it, and desire his army to march over his body, and desert in these solitudes the commander that had so often led them to victory. Nor were the French idle: at the Devil's Bridge, which they broke — at Klönthal, and in many a perilous defile, Masséna's lieutenants attacked and slaughtered the discomfited Russians, who lost two-thirds of their numbers on their route from St. Gotthard to the Grisons. The conqueror of Italy, Suvarov, was indignant with the Austrians, who had laid

a trap, he asserted, for his fair fame. He considered himself betrayed, broke his sword in resentment, and resigned all command in disgust, vowing nevermore to serve with the imperials.

NAPOLEON IN SYRIA AND EGYPT

In the meanwhile what was Napoleon doing in the East? In the spring the Turks had menaced him with two armies — one from Syria. This, with his usual promptitude, he marched in February to anticipate, crossing the desert, and penetrating without opposition into Syria. Jaffa he took by storm. A part of the garrison had retreated into large habitations, and



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA AND EGYPT

prepared for an obstinate defence. The general's aide-de-camp promised them quarter, upon which they laid down their arms. The countenance of Bonaparte fell, on beholding this long train of prisoners. "What should I do with them?" exclaimed he in anger to the aide-de-camp. He had not provisions for his own troops. To retain prisoners was impossible. To set them free was to place so many enemies on his flank. Yet this last should have been nobly resolved on. Bonaparte hesitated. But on the third day the prisoners were marched out, to the number of several thousands, to the beach, and shot in cold blood, some few escaping who swam out to sea. The soldiers made signs of reconciliation to these wretched men, induced them to approach the shore, and there mercilessly shot and slew them. This last act is one of the greatest blots on the character of French soldiers. The general might plead necessity. But here the soldier, of

his free will and caprice, emulated all the atrocities of the Parisian Septembrists.

Immediately after this, the French were checked before the walls of Acre. They formed in vain the siege. The ferocious Jezzar commanded within, and Sir Sidney Smith aided him with cannon, and at need with sailors to work them. The Turkish army, in the meantime advanced, surprised and surrounded Kléber at Mount Tabor; but that general kept them at bay till Bonaparte came to his rescue, surrounded the Moslems in turn, routed and slaughtered them. Acre, despite this victory, was impregnable; after repeated efforts, and the loss of the bravest officers, the French were obliged to retreat. In passing by Jaffa[1] [or Joppa] another instance occurred of Napoleon's placing himself above the common principles of morality. He proposed to administer strong doses of opium to those incurably afflicted with the plague. A system of mercy daily applied to animals he thought might be extended to human life. The surgeons recoiled at a theory of mercy that might be taken for murder. In this instance, as in the more guilty ones of Jaffa and the duke d'Enghien, the influence of the Revolution is seen. Bonaparte was not naturally either a monster, or even a cruel man. But he had started to manhood at a time when the universal mind of France presented a *tabula rasa* of all principle, moral and religious. The great doctrine of expediency had been preached and hallowed by the Revolution, the energy of which was then, and is still, largely admired, and the grand successes of which, as well as its many salutary consequences, were considered if not to hallow its crimes, at least to excuse the principle which generated them.

Returning to Egypt, Bonaparte had to contend with the insurrection of the Arabs, and the discontented projects of his own troops. In July a Turkish army landed at Abukir: the general hastened to attack it. The Moslems showed their wonted valour, repulsed his first effort, till, assaulted again whilst busied in decapitating the slain, they were driven back in disorder. Murat with his cavalry penetrated amongst them, sabred multitudes, and drove the rest into the bay of Abukir. The sea was strewn with turbans. Having thus wiped out the disgrace of Acre, Bonaparte, whose object was not to vegetate in Egypt, prepared to leave his army secretly, and repair to France.*f*

TROUBLES OF THE NEW DIRECTORY

Meanwhile, the Revolution of the 30th Prairial had hardly bettered matters. As a natural consequence of liberty the parties were raising their heads. The "law of hostages" had had no other effect than to make recruits for the Chouans. The hopes of the royalists revived. But they had then but a small representation in the councils, and their most prudent leaders continued to be attached to the constitution of the year III, while others were in haste to depart from it; they awaited events. Some believed that a reform of the constitution would lead to a hereditary presidency.

The patriots showed themselves much more enterprising. They organised in the riding-school (*manège*) a society with a president, secretaries, and correspondents. This was the club du Manège. Demands were made for the execution of all the terrorist measures, for the disarmament of the royalists, for arming the national guard with pikes and cannon, for the

[1 Bonaparte's touching the plague sores of the sick at this place should be remembered, not only as an act of heroism, but as evincing his soldier-like belief in predestination, the only and the singular principle of his creed.]

impeachment of the old directors or of the generals, and for the most severe laws against emigration. The journals of the party, especially the *Hommes libres*, supported this resurrection of Jacobinism; however, while proposing revolutionary measures, they made the pretence of not departing from the constitution and never re-establishing the guillotine.

Besides the directors, Gohier and Moulins, the patriots had on their side the generals Jourdan, Augereau, Bernadotte, and Marbot the governor of Paris. They also counted on Barras, but he had become Sieyès's man, and deserted them, judging that the future would be different and yielding to the advice of Fouché, to whom Barras caused the ministry of police to be given. He was perfectly fitted for the position, being crafty and subtle, well informed of the secrets of the Jacobins all of whom he knew, and being always ready to betray his friends of yesterday for the sake of those of to-morrow. He already deserved what Bonaparte said of him with reference to his mania for intrigue and for being in everything—that "he walked in everybody's shoes." Sieyès sanctioned his appointment in order to rid himself of the "patriots," whom he detested and feared as ungovernable men. He had the courage to tell them of their actions and to crush their absurd proposals in several discourses delivered at the *fêtes* of July 14th, July 28th (9th Thermidor), and August 10th. He stigmatised the time to which were accredited "those disastrous maxims that enlightenment must yield to ignorance, wisdom to folly, reflection to passion; when all those who had served or were capable of serving their country were discredited, outraged, and persecuted, when the most tutelary authority was the most hated because it was authority, when all ideas were confused to such an extent that all those who ought not to be charged with anything were persistently charged with everything." He vigorously attacked those who thought that "to strengthen a government is an infamy and to destroy is always a glory; who as lawless enemies of all order or even appearance of order wished to govern by shouts and not by laws." These philippics had all the more success on account of the demonstrated and well-known circumspection of their author.

LUCIEN BONAPARTE
(1775–1840)

Sieyès had the riding-school closed. This was done quietly by a simple order of the inspectors of the council of Ancients, the action being based upon the fact that the riding-school belonged to the Tuileries. The patriots expelled from the riding-school at once reorganised their club du Manège in the rue du Bac in another hall called the Temple of Peace. Even there

Sieyès pursued them, strengthened by his former success and knowing that he would be supported by a justly alarmed public; for the reappearance of the Jacobins had caused disorders at Amiens, Bordeaux, and Marseilles. On the 13th of August Fouché closed the new club and the directors assumed authority to undertake domiciliary visits in Paris. There was neither opposition nor disorder. The populace proved itself to be tranquillised and indifferent to the invectives which the Jacobin journals heaped upon Sieyès, Barras, and Fouché.

Next the directors, in the absence of a special law, applied to the journalists the penalties prescribed by article 145 of the constitution against the authors and accomplices of plots. They issued warrants of arrest against the printers and editors of thirteen journals and sealed up their presses. The patriot representatives did not fail to cry out that this was a tyranny, that the Directory would not leave the press free because it was meditating a disgraceful peace or a *coup d'état*. However, the sixty-eight accused men were deported to Oléron, and the commission appointed to make a report on the liberty of the press did not make it.

On the 10th of the same month the Directory announced that the domiciliary visits authorised in Paris had been followed by 540 arrests and that the law of hostages would be applied to eighteen departments. On the 13th Jourdan proposed to declare the country in peril: "Our places," he said, "are jeopardised by treason. In the interior a vast royalist conspiracy is entangling the whole republic in its net." The moment had come, according to him, to arouse enthusiasm, to give a new impulse to patriotism. The republicans must rise in a body. For two days this motion filled the assembly of the Five Hundred with tumult and disorder. It was an unfortunate calling forth of the revolutionary traditions.

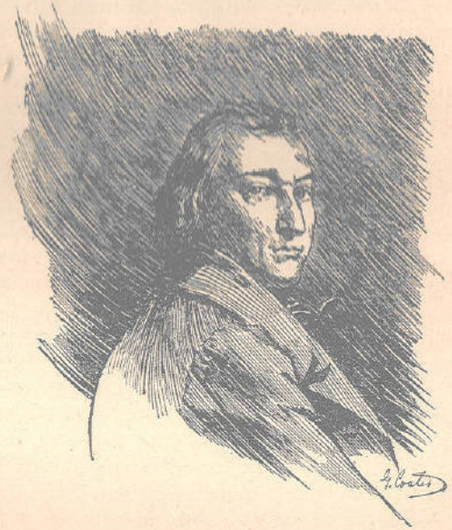
One incident embittered the discussion. Jourdan announced that Bernadotte had been dismissed from the ministry of war, doubtless because he was a patriot, and he expressed fears of the possibility of a *coup d'état*. The assembly arose; all the members shouted that they were ready to die at their posts. Lucien Bonaparte repeated the watchword which Jourdan had uttered — liberty or death. Augereau after a pretended explanation of the part he had had in Fructidor, when he had crushed a conspiracy, took the oath to defend the councils. The motion concerning the peril of the country was rejected, but the agitation had spread outside the hall and the deputies who had voted it down were hissed upon leaving the hall.[g]

NAPOLEON'S RETURN FROM EGYPT (1799 A.D.)

For nearly ten months Bonaparte had received from the Directory only a single despatch which had escaped the hands of the English; but a letter had lately reached him from his brother Joseph, which pressed for his return. On the occasion of an exchange of prisoners, Sidney Smith, who was cruising about near Alexandria, maliciously sent him some newspapers full of bad news. This was at the time of the reverses in Germany and Italy. Since his brother's letter, Bonaparte had meditated leaving Egypt. What he learned from those newspapers decided him. It was clear to him that the days of the Directory were numbered, and that his own time had come. He had no hesitation in deserting the army he had launched on so perilous a venture. He deceived it by the announcement of a journey into Upper Egypt, and, taking the opposite direction, he travelled quickly to Alexandria, which he had made a rendezvous for those he wished to take with him. He

sent word to Desaix, who was in Upper Egypt, to prepare to rejoin him in France; he took most of the best generals with him, Berthier, Lannes, Murat, Marmont, Duroc, the experts Berthollet, Monge, and others, leaving Kléber, to whom he forwarded his instructions, to do what he could with the remainder. He authorised Kléber to treat for the evacuation of Egypt if he had not received succour from France by the following May and if the plague had cost him over fifteen hundred men.

On being informed of the departure of Sidney Smith, who had been obliged to retire to re-victual his fleet, he embarked on the night of the 5th Fructidor (22nd of August) with a small squadron composed of two frigates and two small vessels. Contrary winds and the necessity of avoiding the English rendered the crossing long and difficult. Bonaparte put into his native island for a few days, and it was in Corsica that he obtained information on the situation in France.[1]



CLAUDE LOUIS BERTHOLLET (1788–1822)

In sight of Toulon he narrowly escaped falling into the middle of an English squadron. He escaped the enemy and disembarked at St. Raphael, in the gulf of Fréjus (October 9th, 1799). From Fréjus to Lyons the population received him with the ringing of bells and the blaze of illuminations. The brilliant welcome which he received at Lyons proved to him that the reactionary party, which dominated in that large town, was not attached to the Bourbons and only asked to devote themselves to him. He wrote to his wife and to his brothers that he was going to Paris by way of Burgundy, and then travelled by another route, fearing some obstacle or ambush by the road, at the hands of the Directory. The *Moniteur* announced his return for the 15th of October. He arrived on the 16th. That very evening he presented himself at the house of Gohier, at that time president of the Directory. "President," he said, "the news which reached me in Egypt was so alarming that I have not hesitated to leave my army to come and share your perils."

[1 Hamel,[g] however, says: "He had not even warned Kléber who, with his unreserved candour, would not have failed to tell him how shameless this desertion was, and how culpable it was of him to abandon to an unknown fate so many brave men whom his ambition, his persistent and dogged will, his unappeaseable thirst for renown had thrown without any gain to France into distant Egypt. As it was necessary to leave someone in command, he sent written instructions to the conqueror of Mount Tabor, appointing him in his place to command the army of occupation. No doubt some daring on his part was required to face a perilous voyage in an inferior frigate through the Mediterranean, furrowed in every sense of the word by the victorious English fleets. But there was nothing left to do in Egypt. His irreparable reverse at Acre had demolished his wild dream of laying the foundations of his fortune in the East. He was being invited more or less openly to play the rôle of dictator in France. How could a man of his temper hesitate? He had all that was necessary towards success — prodigious talent, profound genius, and entire absence of scruple. If in Henry IV's opinion 'Paris was worth a mass,' the prospect of becoming supreme lord over France was in the eyes of Napoleon well worth the risk of being taken by an English cruiser."]

"General," answered Gohier, "those perils were great; but we have come out of them gloriously. You arrive to join us in celebrating the triumphs of your companions in arms."

The next day Bonaparte appeared at the official audience of the Directory. He renewed his protestations and, laying his hand on the hilt of his sword, declared that he would never draw it except for the defence "of the republic and its government."

The council of the Five Hundred made an advance to him by electing as their president his brother Lucien, who had acquired some influence by his intrigues and by his flowery and declamatory eloquence. This choice was a grave imprudence, as the event proved.

Bonaparte did not immediately think of a conspiracy and a *coup d'état*. He knew that ardent republicans aimed at getting the election of Sieyès annulled for some irregularity, as had happened in the case of Treilhard. In that event, he meditated procuring his own election as director in the room of Sieyès. But his youth precluded him according to the terms of the constitution, and the two sincerely republican directors, Gohier and Moulins allowed no one to touch the constitution. Neither would the Five Hundred have permitted it. Gohier and Moulins would have restored Bonaparte to the army of Italy; Barras and Sieyès were not in agreement with them on the subject. He was offered, however, a command-in-chief. He did not accept it, on the plea of ill-health. He then conceived the idea of coming to an understanding with the Jacobins for the purpose of making a change in the Directory by a *coup de main*, if the majority could not be obtained in the Five Hundred. For this the concurrence of the republican generals present in Paris would have been needed. Bernadotte and Jourdan refused to take part in the violation of the constitution.

GOHIER
(1746–1830)

Sieyès' responsibility towards posterity is immense. Without him Bonaparte could not have succeeded. Sieyès secured Bonaparte a basis in the very heart of the powers organised by that constitution whose destruction was being plotted. Sieyès commanded a majority of the council of Ancients composed of men who feared the revolutionary ferment of the Five Hundred, and who were disgusted and disheartened by the perpetual divisions of the Directory. Many sincere republicans judged a change in the constitution indispensable to the salvation of the republic, and that the five directors must be replaced by a more concentrated executive power. They were thus drawn, against their will, into preparing the ruin of liberty. Without the concurrence of the majority of the Ancients and of a fraction of the Five Hundred, in the projects vaguely put forward by Bonaparte, a purely military revolution would not have been possible. In spite of the disdainful hostility which the generals exhibited towards the declaimers of the assemblies, the

POLITICAL OFFICE BARODA. LIBRARY

army was still too republican to lend itself wittingly to a stroke aimed at the whole body of legal powers and to own to itself that it was about to give a master to France.

But now the generals flocked around Bonaparte, ready for the most part to follow whither he might desire. Moreau was at Paris, justly dissatisfied with the Directory; he had not been left in command of that army of Italy which he had saved at Novi. Bonaparte won him over by skilful attentions and demonstrations of high esteem. Moreau would not enter into the details of Bonaparte's plans, but he declared to him that he was, like him, "weary of the yoke of the lawyers who were ruining the republic." He placed himself and his aides-de-camp at Bonaparte's disposal. Macdonald and Sérurier also pledged themselves. Berthier, Murat, Lannes, Marmont, all toiled to corrupt the officers of the different arms. The police shut its eyes. The minister Fouché placed himself in a position to obtain the reward of his complicity if the stroke succeeded, without being ruined if it came to grief.

The departmental authorities were secured by the commissioner of the department of Paris Réal. Two of the directors, Sieyès and Roger Ducos, sided with Bonaparte. A third, Barras, was put out of count by the universal distrust and contempt. Bonaparte imposed upon the remaining two, Gohier and Moulins, honest but not very clear-sighted men. He had entered into intimate relations with them and had overwhelmed them with exhibitions of friendship and confidence up to the last moment. The war-minister, Dubois-Crancé, a former member of the national convention, tried in vain to open their eyes.

On November 6th a banquet given to General Bonaparte, took place in the church of St. Sulpice, then called the Temple of Victory. Bonaparte had had a roll and half a bottle of wine brought for him by an aide-de-camp. He was afraid of being poisoned! He drank to the union of all Frenchmen. He was listened to in silence. He went out precipitately and hastened to Sieyès' house to settle final arrangements with him. They agreed to feign a Jacobin conspiracy, in order to give the Ancients a pretext for decreeing the translation of the two councils to St. Cloud. The constitution granted the council of Ancients the right to change the seat of the legislative body in case of "public peril." The public peril which Sieyès and Bonaparte dreaded was that the people at Paris might side with the constitution against the conspirators. The same decree, although the Ancients had constitutionally no right to do this, was to give Bonaparte the command of all the military forces of the Paris division. The councils once transferred to St. Cloud, Sieyès and Roger Ducos would resign and the resignation of the three other directors would be obtained either with their own consent or by force. The Directory having thus disappeared, the two councils would be got to set up three provisional consuls, Bonaparte, Sieyès, and Roger Ducos, who would be charged with the preparation of a new constitution. They counted on extorting the consent of the Five Hundred, when surrounded at St. Cloud by troops devoted to Bonaparte.

THE 18TH BRUMAIRE (NOVEMBER 9TH, 1799)

Nothing was decided as to the actual groundwork of the constitution. Bonaparte, in general terms, affected to trust to the knowledge of his future colleague, and Sieyès did not press the point. It was decided that the blow should be struck within three days.

On the 18th Brumaire (November 9th), at six o'clock in the morning, a crowd of generals and other officers convoked by Bonaparte met at his house. The commandant of the Paris division, Lefebvre, had not been informed of what was on foot; he was a good general and very patriotic, but not very perspicacious. He arrived ill-disposed towards the project. "Well, Lefebvre," Bonaparte said to him, "will you, one of the pillars of the republic, leave it to perish in the hands of these lawyers? See, here is the sabre I wore at the Pyramids; I give it to you as a pledge of my esteem and confidence." "Yes," cried Lefebvre, "let us throw the lawyers into the river." Bonaparte was not so fortunate with Bernadotte. He had come in bourgeois dress, brought by his brother-in-law, Joseph Bonaparte. He refused to join in the undertaking, affirmed that it would not succeed, and withdrew without promising to remain neutral. The council of Ancients was meeting at that very moment. Those members whose opposition was anticipated had not been convoked.

Everything fell out as Bonaparte and Sieyès had arranged. To provide against pretended dangers the Ancients decreed the translation of the two councils to St. Cloud on the next day. Bonaparte was charged with the measures necessary to the execution of the decree and with the command of all the military forces. A short, vague proclamation accompanied the decree. Bonaparte appeared at the council of Ancients with all his brilliant staff. The decree was read to him. "Citizen representatives," he said, "the republic was perishing; your decree has now saved it. We desire a republic founded on true liberty, on civil liberty, on national representation. We shall have it; I swear it in my own name and in the name of all my companions in arms." All the generals cried, "I swear it." But Bonaparte had not tendered the legal oath to the constitution of the year III.

Bonaparte went to review the troops at the Carrousel, in the garden of the Tuileries and at the place de la Concorde. Sure of the commanding officers, he had convoked the regiments for a review even before the Ancients had invested him with the command. The war-minister, Dubois-Crancé, had vainly issued a counter order. Bonaparte was received with acclamations by the soldiers and cordially welcomed by the population, who ran up astonished and curious. What was passing did not give them the impression of a revolution. A small pamphlet explaining that the constitution needed restoring was distributed in the streets. "It would" it was there stated "be sacrilege to attack the representative government in the century of liberty and enlightenment."

Whilst the Ancients were convoked for seven in the morning, the Five Hundred had only been summoned for eleven o'clock. Lively interpellations were made on the subject of the decree of translation. The president of the Five Hundred, Lucien Bonaparte, answered, as the president of the Ancients had done, that further discussion could only take place next day at St. Cloud. The Five Hundred separated with cries of "Long live the Constitution of the year III!" The most energetic turned their attention to seek means of resistance. Bonaparte actively pursued his task. Sieyès and Roger-Ducos had already given in their resignations. Talleyrand intervened with Barras, who now only asked security for his person and money. Barras sent his resignation to the Tuileries.

Bonaparte took the opportunity to make a theatrical scene. "What have you done," he said to Barras' secretary, in a thundering voice, "what have you done to this France which I left so glorious? I left peace, I find war; I left victory, I find reverses; I left the millions of Italy, I find rapacious laws and poverty! What is become of the hundred thousand men who have disappeared from French soil? They were my companions in arms — they are dead. Such a state of things cannot last; it would lead through anarchy to despotism." This harangue was intended, not for Barras' secretary, but for the public; it was instantly sent to the papers. The two remaining directors, Gohier and Moulins, awakened at last from their unsuspecting security, saw the last means of action escape from their hands by the defection of Barras.

There was no longer a Directory. However, they appeared at the Tuileries to try one last effort. Bonaparte tried to seduce them. "Unite with us," he said, "to save the republic! Your constitution does not supply the means. It is crumbling in every part; it is exhausted." "Who told you that?" answered Gohier. "Wretches who have neither the will nor the courage to march with it. The republic is triumphing everywhere, triumphing without your help."

At this moment, Bonaparte received the news that the faubourg St. Antoine was beginning to rally round its ancient commandant Santerre. He declared to Moulins, who was a friend of Santerre, that he would shoot the latter if he stirred. He tried in vain to wring their resignations from Gohier and Moulins. Neither threats nor caresses had any effect. These two men, mediocre in intelligence but upright in heart, secured honour for their memory by their firmness. They returned to the seat of the Directory, the Luxembourg, which Bonaparte caused to be guarded by troops. Moreau had accepted the command of this post which made him the jailer of the directors. Bonaparte had maliciously involved this great general in a part unworthy of him. It was always his policy to compromise men whose talents or honesty were in his way, that he might reduce them to being his instruments.

The 18th Brumaire had seen a successful day's work in Paris. The movement in the suburbs came to nothing. There was still the morrow at St. Cloud. What would the two councils do? The leaders of the majority of the Ancients and of the minority of the Five Hundred met that evening at the Tuileries with Bonaparte, Sieyès, Roger Ducos, and the minister of police Fouché. Sieyès proposed to have forty of their principal opponents in the two councils arrested. It was Bonaparte who refused. He thought himself so sure of success that he judged violence useless. Some of the representatives who had shared in the hazard began to feel misgivings about their work and to dispute the necessity of a dictatorship. They would now have wished Bonaparte to content himself with taking his place in a new Directory. It was too late. Bonaparte told them plainly that a change in the constitution was in question; that for the moment it was necessary to have a dictatorship, in fact, if not in name. They did not venture to insist. It was agreed to establish three provisional consuls and to adjourn the two councils for three months. Bonaparte left without anything having been settled about the future constitution. "You have a master there," said Sieyès. It was he who had given them that master.

During the night a dozen of the people's representatives had concerted together to organise resistance. They had decided to assemble such colleagues as they could count on, before the hour fixed for the sitting at St. Cloud and to give the command of the guard of the Five Hundred to Bernadotte. Here was a serious risk; but they had had the imprudence to meet at the house of a Corsican deputy, Salicetti, whom they believed to be an enemy of Bonaparte. Salicetti denounced them, and Fouché's police prevented their meeting at St. Cloud.

THE 19TH BRUMAIRE

The two councils opened their sitting at St. Cloud on the 19th Brumaire, a little before two o'clock: the Ancients sat in one of the halls of the palace, the Five Hundred in the orangery. One of Bonaparte's chief adherents proposed that the Five Hundred should name a committee to consider the danger of the republic. This was a way of avoiding debate. The assembly responded almost *en masse* with the cry "Long live the constitution! Down with the dictatorship." It decided that all the deputies should be called on by name to renew the oath of fidelity to the constitution of the year III. The president, Lucien Bonaparte, was obliged to swear with the others. This was nevertheless a mistake, for these formalities gave their adversaries time. However, the Ancients were no longer in the almost complete unanimity of the day before.

Bonaparte, warned of their hesitation, suddenly presented himself before them. Disconcerted by the unforeseen resistance, frightened, and irritated at being so, he spoke in an incoherent and confused manner, at once violent and vague. He protested against the accusation of desiring to be a Cæsar or a Cromwell, even while affirming that the wish of his comrades and of the nation had long called him to the supreme authority. "Let us save liberty and equality," he said. A deputy cried out to him: "And the constitution?" "The constitution?" he answered in an outburst of passion, "you violated it on the 18th Fructidor; you violated it on the 22nd Floréal; you violated it on the 30th Prairial." This was bold on the part of the man who had been foremost in ardour on the 18th Fructidor. "The constitution!" he resumed. "It can no longer be a means of salvation for us, because it no longer commands respect from anyone." And he concluded by demanding a concentration of power which he would abdicate as soon as the danger should be passed.

"What danger?" he was asked. He answered by declaiming at factions and finished with an outburst against the Five Hundred, "amongst whom," he said, "were men who wanted to re-establish the revolutionary committees and the scaffold! If some orator, paid by the foreigner, spoke of putting me outside the pale of the law, I would appeal to you my brave companions in arms, whose bayonets I see! Remember that I march accompanied by the god of fortune and the god of war!" He went out, leaving in the Ancients his partisans anxious, and his adversaries reanimated.

The fortune of which Bonaparte had boasted was wavering. Jourdan, Augereau, and Bernadotte were at St. Cloud, ready to take advantage of circumstances and to show themselves to the troops. Bonaparte felt there was no longer a moment to be lost and went from the Ancients to the Five Hundred. The Five Hundred had just decided on the despatch of a message to the Ancients, to demand the cause of the translation of the two councils. Barras' resignation had been read to them and they were discussing the question of nominating another director in his place when Bonaparte appeared. He was escorted by several generals and some grenadiers belonging to the guard of the legislative body.

At sight of the arms the assembly rose in tumult. "What is this?" was the cry—"sabres here! bayonets!"

A crowd of representatives sprang in front of Bonaparte. "You are violating the sanctuary of law," the deputy Bigonnet exclaimed to him. "Is it for this you have conquered!" said the deputy Destremx. On all sides broke out cries of "Down with the tyrant! Outlaw the dictator!"

Several seized him by the collar crying, "Get out of this," and shook him roughly. He turned pale and shrank back, he who had so many times impassively faced the showers of grape. General Lefebvre and the grenadiers left near the door hurried up. The grenadiers seized him round the body, released him, and dragged him out of the hall.

The president, Lucien, essayed to defend his brother. The cries of "Outlaw the dictator" resounded anew. "Would you have me outlaw my own brother?" returned Lucien with theatrical despair. He protested, he struggled obstinately. It was then seen what a mistake the assembly had committed in giving themselves, as president, the natural accomplice of the man they dreaded. The cries of "Outlaw!" made themselves heard in the group in which Bonaparte was standing. There was a moment of terror. They recollected the 9th Thermidor. Sieyès alone retained his self-possession. "They are putting you outside the pale of the law," he said to Bonaparte; "it is they who are outside it."

Bonaparte, by a sudden inspiration, sent ten grenadiers in search of his brother. The grenadiers penetrated into the hall and brought Lucien away. It was a masterly stroke. They had not been able to intimidate the assembly, but there was now the question of invading it with the legislative body's own guard, which had been placed under the command of Murat. The attitude of this guard was uncertain and there was some hesitation to give it orders which perhaps it might not obey. The conspirators now had with them the president of the assembly himself. Lucien, mounted on horseback, placed himself beside his brother, and harangued the soldiers. "The president of the Five Hundred," he said, "makes known to you that that council is oppressed by representatives who are threatening their colleagues and lifting the dagger against them. They are brigands in the pay of England; they are in rebellion against the council of the Ancients. Soldiers, in the name of the people, deliver the majority of your representatives. The true legislators are about to rally round me; those who remain in the orangery are no longer the people's representatives. Long live the republic!" The soldiers cried "Long live Bonaparte!" Yet they still hesitated; Lucien seized a sword and, turning to his brother: "I swear," he said, "to pierce the heart of my own brother if ever he shall attack the liberty of Frenchmen."

Murat had the charge sounded and led his soldiers forward. They stopped, however, at the threshold of the assembly. "Citizen representatives," cried their colonel, "by order of the general, I request you to withdraw. We can no longer answer for the safety of the council." The representatives responded with a cry of "Long live the republic! Long live the constitution of the year III!" and remained in their places. "Grenadiers, advance," cried the commandant. The noise of the drum drowned the last protestations of the assembly. The soldiers advanced, pushing the people's representatives before them. The hall was evacuated.[1]

THE CONSULATE ESTABLISHED

In the evening, about nine o'clock, Lucien Bonaparte assembled some thirty members of the Five Hundred, who declared themselves to be the majority of the council, and decreed that Bonaparte, the generals, and the grenadiers had deserved well of the country. Boulay proposed and carried the measures agreed on by the conspirators, namely: the nomination of

[1 The deputies escaped by the windows, and through the woods; leaving, not unsuitably, their Roman togas in fragments upon every bush.]

three consuls, the adjournment of the legislative body for three months, the formation of two committees of the councils charged to assist the consuls in "the changes to be introduced into the constitution," and finally the exclusion of fifty-seven of the people's representatives, amongst whom was General Jourdan.

The decree was brought to the Ancients at one o'clock in the morning and ratified by them. "The changes to be introduced into the constitution," it was stated in the decree, "can have no aim but the preservation of the sovereignty of the French people, of the republic one and indivisible, of the representative system, of the division of powers, and liberty, equality, and safety of life and property."

The three consuls went to take the oath before the two councils. The little group from the Five Hundred had been gradually swelled by such men as always rally to the side of fortune. Bonaparte was the first to swear inviolable fidelity to law, liberty, and the representative system. The president, Lucien, congratulated his colleagues in a harangue wherein he concluded that "if French liberty was born in the tennis court of Versailles, it had been consolidated in the orangery of St. Cloud."

On the 21st Brumaire, appeared a proclamation from Bonaparte to the French people. In it he declared himself to have repulsed the proposals of the factions (it was he who made the rejected proposals to the factions). He averred that he had but executed the plan of social restoration conceived by the Ancients, and affirmed that, in the Five Hundred, twenty assassins had flung themselves upon him, stiletto in hand, and that one of his grenadiers in thrusting himself between him and the assassins had been hit by a blow from a stiletto. All this was pure invention. There was falsehood everywhere. The accomplices of the *coup d'état* talked of nothing but the principles of '89 and "liberal ideas." It was indeed at this time that the use of the word "liberal" became common.

Now the 18th Brumaire had just struck a blow at the principles of '89 and at liberal ideas, the consequences of which were to grow more and more serious for the space of fifteen years — a blow more fatal than even that of the 31st of May, and which struck more deeply into the moral life of France. Before these principles and ideas could begin to again lift up their heads, abysses had to be crossed into which the greatness of France perished after her liberty. Up till then, the Revolution had never ceased to progress amidst the tempests. The republic of '92 had been an advance on the royal democracy of '91; the constitution of the year III had been an advance on the revolutionary dictatorship; from the 18th Brumaire the Revolution for a long time swerved and went backward.

It is in the moral state of the country, and not in the individual fact of the disagreement between the Ancients and the Five Hundred, that we must seek the cause of the 18th Brumaire. It was not because there were then two assemblies that the republic perished. If there were two assemblies on the 18th Brumaire there was but one on the 2nd of December. We ought no more to reproach the convention for having instituted two chambers in the year III than the constituent assembly for having established but one in 1791. The convention and the constituent assembly both acted as it behoved them to act. Mignet,[1] the first historian to sum up the general facts and the spirit of the Revolution with any depth of insight, has rightly said: "Revolutions are begun with one chamber and they are finished with two." It is evident why the constitution of the year III had not succeeded in finishing the Revolution.

THIERS ON THE FALL OF THE DIRECTORY[1]

Such was the revolution of the 18th Brumaire, so variously judged by men, regarded by some as the heinous crime which nipped the bud of liberty, by others as a bold but necessary blow which terminated anarchy. What may in truth be said is that the Revolution, after having worn all characters, monarchical, republican, democratic, assumed at last the military guise, because, in the continual struggle with Europe, it required to be constituted in a strong and solid manner. Republicans deplore so many fruitless efforts, such torrents of blood uselessly shed to establish liberty in France, and sigh to witness it sacrificed by one of the heroes it had generated. In this, a sentiment more noble than reflective misleads them. The Revolution, intended doubtless to confer liberty on France and a preparative to her full enjoyment of it some day, was not nor could be itself liberty. It was rather a convulsive struggle against the ancient order of things. And after having vanquished this order in France, it had to overcome it in Europe.

A contest so violent admitted not the forms nor even the spirit of liberty. An interval of liberty existed under the constituent assembly, and of very short duration; but when the popular party became so violent as to cause general intimidation; when it invaded the Tuileries on the 10th of August; when it immolated all who gave it umbrage on the 2nd of September; when on the 21st of January it provoked universal complicity by the sacrifice of a regal victim; when in August, 1793, it compelled every citizen to repair to the frontiers or surrender his property — when, in fine, it abdicated its own power and delegated it to that great committee of public welfare composed of twelve individuals, was there or could there be liberty? No; there was the strenuous effort of passion and of heroism, the muscular tension of a wrestler contending against a powerful adversary.

After the first period of danger, after the victories of the French arms, there was a moment of reprieve. The end of the convention and the Directory presented degrees of liberty. But the conflict with Europe could only be for a while suspended. It soon recommenced; and at the first reverse, all parties arose against a too moderate government and invoked some potent arm. Bonaparte, returning with the halo of glory from the East, was hailed as the desired chief and installed in power.

It is in vain to allege that Zurich had saved France. Zurich was an isolated accident, a mere respite; Marengo and Hohenlinden were still needed for her salvation. And more than military successes were required; a powerful internal reorganisation of all the departments of government had become essential, and a political rather than a military chief was the main exigency of France. The 18th and 19th Brumaire were therefore necessary. It may be affirmed only that the 20th was condemnable, and that the hero abused the service he had just rendered. But it will be answered that he acted under a mysterious mission which he held, unknown to himself, from destiny, and which he fulfilled as an instrument.

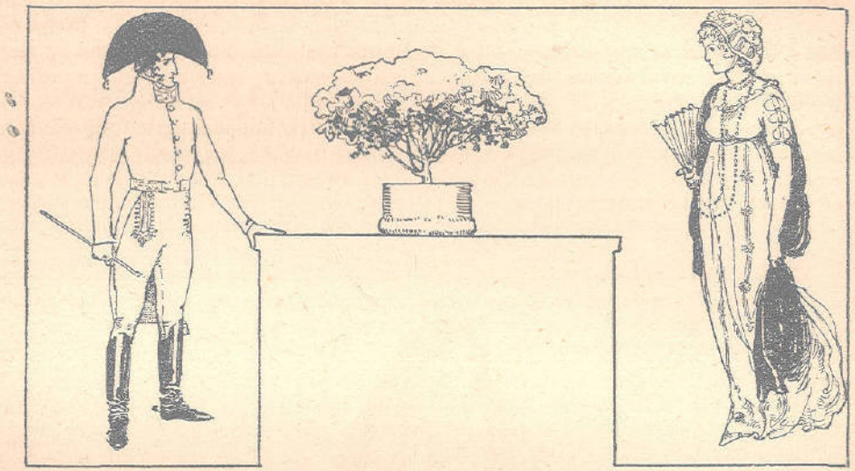
It was not liberty he came to uphold, for it could not yet exist; he came to continue under monarchical forms the Revolution in the world; to continue it by placing himself, a plebeian, on the throne; by conducting the pontiff to Paris to pour the sacred oil on a plebeian forehead; by creating an aristocracy with plebeians; by compelling the old aristocracies to associate with his plebeian aristocracy; by making kings of plebeians; by receiving into his

[1] It is with these words that Thiers ends his history of the Revolution.]

[1799 A.D.]

bed a daughter of the cæsars and mingling a plebeian blood with one of the most ancient royal bloods in Europe; by intermixing nations and spreading French laws through Germany, Italy, and Spain; by refuting, in fine, all established prejudices, by stirring and confounding all elements. Such the inscrutable mission he was to accomplish: and in the interim, the new society was to be consolidated under the ægis of his sword, and liberty was to follow at the appointed time.[c]

A Peasant of the French Pyrenees



CHAPTER XVII

THE CONSULATE

[1799–1801 A.D.]

> From this moment the republic was changed into a military monarchy, and this would have been to the great advantage of France and of all Europe had the great mind which created this new order of things persevered in that plebeian way which had made him a hero, and not renewed the ancient knighthood and the Byzantine throne.
> — Alison.[b]

During the two eventful days of the 18th and 19th Brumaire the people of Paris had remained perfectly tranquil. In the evening of the 19th reports of the failure of the enterprise were generally spread and diffused the most mortal disquietude; for all ranks, worn out with the agitation and sufferings of past convulsions, passionately longed for repose, and it was generally felt that it could be obtained only under the shadow of military authority. But at length the result was communicated by the fugitive members of the Five Hundred, who arrived from St. Cloud, loudly exclaiming against the military violence of which they had been the victims; and at nine at night the intelligence was officially announced by a proclamation of Napoleon, which was read by torch-light to the agitated groups. The five-per-cents, which had been last quoted at seven, rose in a few days to thirty.

With the exception of the legislature, all parties declared for the Revolution of 18th Brumaire. All hoped to see their peculiar tenets forwarded by the change. The constitutionalists trusted that rational freedom would at length be established; the royalists rejoiced that the first step towards a regular government had been made, and secretly indulged the hope that Bonaparte would play the part of General Monk, and restore the throne. The great body of the people, weary of strife, and exhausted by suffering, passionately rejoiced at the commencement of repose; the numerous exiles and proscribed families exulted in the prospect of revisiting their country.

Ten years had wrought a century of experience; the nation was as unanimous in 1799 to terminate the era of Revolution as in 1789 it had been to commence it.

Napoleon rivalled Cæsar in the clemency with which he used his victory. No proscriptions or massacres, few arrests or imprisonments, followed the triumph of order over revolution. On the contrary, numerous acts of mercy, as wise as they were magnanimous, made illustrious the rise of the consular throne. The law of hostages and the forced loans were abolished; the priests and persons proscribed by the revolution of 18th Fructidor were permitted to return; the emigrants who had been shipwrecked on the coast of France, and thrown into prison, where they had been confined for four years, were set at liberty. Measures of severity were at first put in force against the violent republicans; but they were gradually relaxed, and finally given up. Thirty-seven of this obnoxious party were ordered to be transported to Guiana, and twenty-one to be put under the observation of the police; but the sentence of transportation was soon changed into one of surveillance, and even that was shortly abandoned. Nine thousand state prisoners, who at the fall of the Directory languished in the prisons of France, received their liberty. Their numbers, two years before, had been sixty thousand. The elevation of Napoleon was not only unstained by blood, but not even a single captive long lamented the progress of the victor; a signal triumph of the principles of humanity over those of cruelty, glorious alike to the actors and the age in which it occurred; and a memorable proof how much more durable the victories gained by moderation and wisdom are than those achieved by violence and stained by blood.

NAPOLEON GETS THE UPPER HAND OF SIEYÈS

The revolution of the 18th Brumaire had established a provisional government and overturned the Directory; but it still remained to form a permanent constitution. In the formation of it a rupture took place between Sieyès and Napoleon. Napoleon allowed Sieyès to mould, according to his pleasure, the legislature, which was to consist of a senate, or upper chamber; a legislative body, without the power of debate; and a tribunate which was to discuss the legislative measures with the council of state; but opposed the most vigorous resistance to the plan he brought forward for the executive, which was so absurd that it is hardly possible to imagine how it could have been seriously proposed by a man of ability.

The plan of this veteran constitution-maker, who had boasted to Talleyrand ten years before that "politics was a science which he flattered himself he had brought to perfection," was to have vested the executive in a single grand elector, who was to inhabit Versailles with a salary of 600,000 francs a year, and a guard of six thousand men, and represent the state to foreign powers. This singular magistrate was to be vested with no immediate authority; but his functions were to consist in the power of naming two consuls, who were to exercise all the powers of government, the one being charged with the interior, the finances, police, and public justice; the other with the exterior, including war, marine, and foreign affairs. He was to have a council of state, to discuss with the tribunate all public measures. He was to be irresponsible, but liable to removal at the pleasure of the senate. It was easy to perceive that, though he imagined he was acting on general principles, Sieyès in this project was governed by his own interests; that the situation of grand elector he destined for himself, and the military

consulship for the conqueror of Arcola and Rivoli. But Sieyès soon found that his enterprising colleague would listen to no project which interfered with the supreme power, which he had already resolved to obtain for himself.

The ideas of Napoleon were unalterably fixed; but he was too clear-sighted not to perceive that time, and a concession, in form at least, to public opinion, were necessary ere he could bring them into practice. "I was convinced," says he, "that France could not exist save under a monarchical form of government; but the circumstances of the times were such, that it was thought, and perhaps was, necessary to disguise the supreme power of the president. All opinions were reconciled by the nomination of a first consul, who alone should possess the authority of government, since he singly disposed of all situations, and possessed a deliberative voice, while the two others were merely his advisers. That supreme officer gave the government the advantage of unity of direction: the two others, whose names appeared to every public act, would soothe the republican jealousy. The circumstances of the times would not permit a better form of government." After long discussion, this project was adopted.

CONSTITUTION OF THE YEAR VIII (1799 A.D.)

The government was in fact exclusively placed in the hands of the first consul; the two other consuls had a right to enlighten him by their counsels, but not to restrain him by their vote. The senate, itself nominated by the consuls, selected out of the list of candidates who had been chosen by the nation those who were to be the members of the tribunate and legislative. Government alone was invested with the right of proposing laws. The legislative body was interdicted the right of speaking; it was merely to deliberate and decide upon the questions discussed before it by the tribunate, chosen by the senate, and the council of state nominated by the consuls: the first being understood to represent the interests of the people, the second that of the government. The legislature was thus transformed from its essential character in a free state, that of a deliberative assembly, into a supreme court, which heard the state pleadings, and by its decision formed the law.

The people no longer were permitted to choose deputies for themselves, either in their primary assemblies or electoral colleges. They were allowed only to choose the persons eligible to these offices, and from the lists thus furnished the government made its election. All public functionaries, civil and military, instead of being chosen, as heretofore, by the people, were appointed by the first consul, who thus became the sole depository of influence. By means of the senate, chosen from his creatures, he regulated the legislature and possessed the sole initiative of laws; by the appointment to every office, he wielded the whole civil force of the state; by the command of the military, he overawed the discontented, and governed its external relations.

The departmental lists were the most singular part of the new constitution. Every person born and residing in France, above twenty-one, was a citizen; but the rights of citizenship were lost by bankruptcy, domestic service, crime, or foreign naturalisation. But the electors were a much more limited body. "The citizens of each arrondissement chose by their suffrages those whom they deemed fit to conduct public affairs amounting to not more than a tenth of the electors. The persons contained in this first list were alone eligible to official situations in the arrondissement from

which they were chosen. The citizens embraced in this list chose a tenth of their number for each department, which formed the body alone eligible for departmental situations. The citizens chosen by the departmental electors again selected a tenth of their number, which formed the body alone capable of being elected for national situations. The persons on the first list were only eligible to the inferior situations, such as *juges de paix*, a species of arbiters to reconcile differences and prevent lawsuits; those on the second were the class from whom might be selected the prefects, the departmental judges, tax-gatherers and collectors; those on the third, who amounted only to six thousand persons, were alone eligible to public offices, — as the legislature, any of the ministries of state, the senate, the council of state, the tribunal of cassation, the ambassadors at foreign courts."

Thus, the whole offices of state were centred in six thousand persons, chosen by a triple election from the citizens. The lists were to be revised, and all the vacancies filled up every three years. These lists of eligibility, as Napoleon justly observed, formed a limited and exclusive nobility, differing from the old noblesse only in this, that it was elective, not hereditary; and it was, from the very first, subject to the objection that it excluded from the field of competition many of the most appropriate persons to hold public situations. The influence of the people in the legislature was, by these successive elections, completely destroyed, and the whole power of the state, it was early foreseen, would centre in the first consul. The changes introduced however, diffused general satisfaction. All the members of the legislature received pensions from the government; that of the senators was 25,000 francs; that of the tribunate 15,000 francs; that of the legislative body 10,000 francs. The senate was composed of persons above forty years of age; the legislative body, above thirty. A senator remained in that high station for life, and was ineligible to any other office.

On the 24th of December, 1799, the new constitution was proclaimed; and the whole appointments were forthwith filled up, without waiting for the lists of the eligible, who were, according to its theory, to be chosen by the people. Two consuls, eighty senators, a hundred tribunes, three hundred legislators, were forthwith nominated and proceeded to the exercise of all the functions of government. In the choice of persons to fill such a multitude of offices ample means existed to reward the moderate and seduce the republican party; and the consuls made a judicious and circumspect use of the immense influence put into their hands. Sieyès, discontented with the rejection of his favourite ideas, retired from the government. Roger Ducos also withdrew, perceiving the despotic turn which things were taking; and Napoleon appointed in their stead Cambacérès and Lebrun, men of moderation and probity, who worthily discharged the subordinate functions assigned to them in the administration. "In the end," said Napoleon, "you must come to the government of boots and spurs; and neither Sieyès nor Roger Ducos was fit for that." Talleyrand was made minister of foreign affairs, and Fouché retained in the ministry of the police; the illustrious La Place received the portfolio of the interior. By the latter appointments Napoleon hoped to calm the fears and satisfy the ambition of the republican party. Sieyès was very averse to the continuance of Fouché in office; but Napoleon was resolute. "We have arrived," said he, "at a new era; we must recollect in the past only the good, and forget the bad. Age, the habits of business, and experience, have formed or modified many characters." High salaries were given to all the public functionaries, on condition only that they should live in a style of splendour suitable to their station: a wise measure, which

both secured the attachment of that powerful body of men, and precluded them from acquiring such an independence as might enable them to dispense with employment under government.

Such was the exhaustion of the French people, occasioned by revolutionary convulsions, that this constitution, destroying, as it did, all the objects for which the people had combated for ten years, was gladly adopted by an immense majority of the electors. It was approved of by 3,011,007 citizens; while that of 1793 had obtained only 1,801,918 suffrages, and that in 1795, which established the Directory, 1,057,390. These numbers are highly instructive. They demonstrate what so many other considerations conspire to indicate, that even the most vehement changes are brought about by a factious and energetic minority, and that it is often more the supineness than the numerical inferiority of the better class of citizens which subjects them to the tyranny of the lowest.

Such was the termination of the changes of the French Revolution and such the government which the people brought upon themselves by their sins and their extravagance. On the 23rd of June, 1789, before one drop of blood had been shed, or one estate confiscated, Louis offered the states-general a constitution containing all the elements of real freedom, with all the guarantees which experience has proved to be necessary for its continuance — the security of property, the liberty of the press, personal freedom, equality of taxation, provincial assemblies, the voting of taxes by the states-general, and the vesting of the legislative power in the representatives of the three estates in their separate chambers. The popular representatives, seduced by the phantom of democratic ambition, refused the offer, usurped for themselves the whole powers of sovereignty, and with relentless rigour pursued their victory, till they had destroyed the clergy, the nobles and the throne.

France waded through an ocean of blood; calamities unheard of assailed every class, from the throne to the cottage; for ten long years the struggle continued, and at length it terminated in the establishment, by universal consent, of a government which swept away every remnant of freedom, and consigned the state to the tranquillity of military despotism. So evidently was this result the punishment of the crimes of the Revolution, that it appeared in that light even to some of the principal actors in that convulsion. In a letter written by Sieyès to Riouffe at that period, he said, "It is then for such a result that the French nation has gone through its Revolution! The ambitious villain! He marches successfully through all the ways of fortune and crime — all is vanity, distrust, and terror. There is here neither elevation nor liberality. Providence wishes to punish us by the Revolution itself. Our chains are too humiliating; on all sides nothing is to be seen but powers prostrated, leaden oppression; military despotism is alone triumphant. If anything could make us retain some esteem for the nation, it is the luxury of perfidy of which it has been the victim. But the right of the sabre is the weakest of all; for it is the one which is soonest worn out."[b]

Yet Brumaire taken by itself is the victory of Sieyès rather than of Bonaparte. It raised Sieyès to the position he had so long coveted of legislator for France. The constitution now introduced was really in great part his work, but his work was so signally altered that it resulted in the absolute supremacy of Bonaparte. We should especially notice that it is Sieyès, not Bonaparte, who practically suppresses representative institutions; and we see with astonishment that the man of 1789, the author of *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers État?* himself condemns political liberty. Sieyès, who retained all his hatred for the old régime and the old noblesse, passed sentence upon the

whole constructive work of the Revolution; this sentence was only ratified by Bonaparte. But, while he absolutely condemned democracy, Sieyès did not want to set up despotism.c

RESUMPTION OF WAR

Upon his first assuming the office of chief magistrate of the state, Bonaparte sank his military propensities and character. He entered with novel delight upon the task of legislating and administering. His vanity, too, of which he had no inordinate measure, just as much as may be allowed to mingle with greatness, was pleased with the pomp of his station, and which he began to arrange early after the old regal standard. He liked to act king; and he took no small pleasure in announcing his accession to the generals and envoys of the republic, as well as to foreign states.

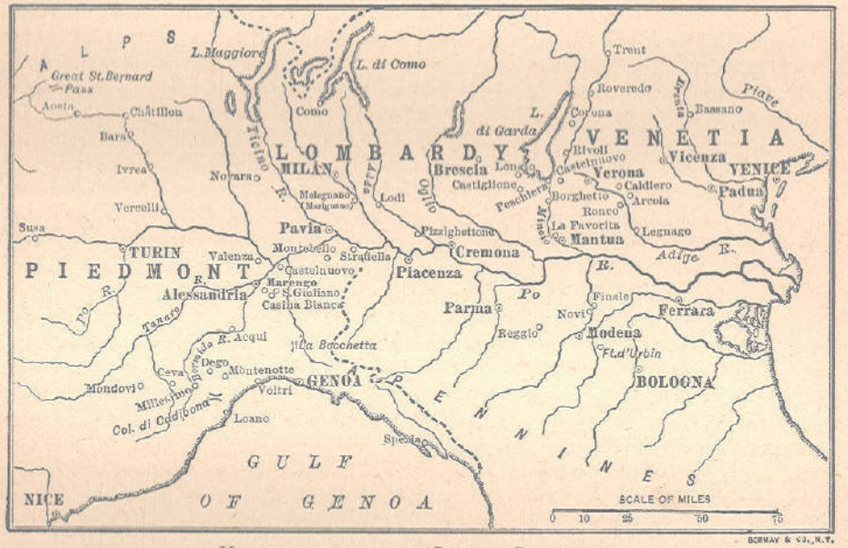
His letter to the monarch of Great Britain must be considered in this light. It was an announcement of his sovereignty; being perfectly aware that at that epoch England would not seek peace on the terms that the first consul could grant. Lord Grenville's reply, though of befitting spirit, was too verbose for pride, too vague for argument. It was really unfortunate for Austria that she did not follow the advice of the archduke Charles, in making peace now in the hour of success. Her yielding would have obliged England to have put an end to the war, and a treaty then would have been more favourable to the allies than that of Amiens proved. Engaged in the paths of peace, Bonaparte might not have found his new despotism so tranquilly submitted to; and even he might have passed, like Barras, had not the victory of Marengo placed the crown upon his head. Austria, however, did not condescend to these considerations. Her imperial pride, sustained by British money, had resolved upon another campaign, in which the fierce soldiers of Suvaroff were to be ill replaced by German contingents from Bavaria and other petty principalities. The archduke Charles protested, he saw no wisdom in this zeal; and he was removed in consequence from command.

Previous to taking the field, Bonaparte determined to root out even the semblance of civil war. He summoned the Vendean and Chouan chiefs to Paris with fair promise of accommodation. They had hopes, such as many entertained, of his restoring the Bourbons — an idea far from his intentions. Most of them submitted. The fiercest, Georges Cadoudal, Bonaparte sought to awe or win in a personal interview. But the Breton, true to the stubbornness of his provincial character, only conceived a more deadly enmity towards the new dictator.

"A new dynasty," say the French orators of the day, "must be baptised in blood." Bonaparte felt so. He had need of a crowning victory, not only for his country's but his own sake, and he was determined that it should be full and glorious, opened by a gigantic march which was calculated as much to strike imaginations at home as to distress the Austrian. The first consul had despatched Moreau to the Rhine. For his own purposes, an army, called that of reserve, was collected at Dijon, and organised by Berthier. His object was to recover Italy, which the Austrians now occupied to the foot of the Alps, with the exception of Genoa, where Masséna still held out, though pressed hard by famine, by the Austrians on land, and by an English fleet. Melas, commander of the imperial armies, had his quarters at Alessandria; his troops and views all directed towards the Savoy Alps in pursuit of Suchet, who was retreating over those mountains. Of meeting with the

French general in any other direction he did not dream, and the name properly given to the army assembled at Dijon, that of reserve, indicated no bolder intention than that of defending the course of the Rhine.

The real views of Bonaparte were indeed too bold to have entered into the Austrian general's conception. They were, to traverse Switzerland with his army, by Geneva, its lake, and the valley of the Rhone, to Martigny; from thence to cross Mount St. Bernard, and descend into the plains of Lombardy in the rear of Melas. The communications of the Austrian would thus be cut off, all his plans deranged, his troops obliged to countermarch and take new positions; whilst a defeat would be total ruin. To keep up the dread of his name by surprise was another object with Bonaparte, who knew the value of being original in war. On the 6th of May the first consul left Paris. The army of Dijon, reinforced from the Rhine,



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGNS

and amounting to about 40,000 men, marched into Switzerland. Mount St. Bernard was crossed, its passage by the gallant hosts forming one of the most picturesque feats in the annals of modern warfare.d

NAPOLEON CROSSES THE ALPS (MAY 20TH, 1800)

The account of this famous achievement may be compared with Polybius' recital of Hannibal's similar march in the history of Rome, vol. V, chapter XI. But it must be remembered that Hannibal marched through an unknown region infested by hostile tribes, and while the skill with which Napoleon accomplished his end redounds to his credit, it also redounded to the ease of the deed, and the following account, while iconoclastic, is correct.a

Bonaparte stayed forty-eight hours at Geneva to inspect all that had been done in the way of transport for the mountain war by the artillery and engineers. All the ingenious modes of transportation were due to

the generals Marmont and Marescot, to whom the first consul had confided the artillery for the campaign. After the inspection Bonaparte fixed his headquarters at Lausanne, a well chosen centre, while the reserve carried out its movement on Villeneuve by the Italian roads across Valais.

The reserves were made up of several bodies, each under a young and ardent general. The first, which took the name of advance guard, was directed by Lannes, the companion of Bonaparte in the Italian army. Berthier commanded the centre in his capacity of commander-in-chief, this being a post which Bonaparte could not hold; but it was an open secret that the first consul was really commanding with Berthier as chief of staff. The artillery, the most important part, was directed by Marmont, the engineers by Marescot.

Doubtless, for men accustomed to monotonous levels the St. Bernard routes must have seemed terrible; otherwise there was nothing very extraordinary or fantastic in this mule-back passage, except for the artillery, on a road that a little precaution could make secure.

According to orders from the commander-in-chief, rations were sent up to the monks to be distributed as extra refreshment to the army when it should reach the top, and a reward of five francs was promised to every soldier who should help in getting up the artillery. With all the lightheartedness of Frenchmen, the soldiers of the Lannes division boldly began to ascend the first rock of Mount St. Bernard. It is just as well to state, in order to be historically correct, that the Lannes division left on the 15th of May and by the 16th was on the other side of the mountain. On the 16th the Berthier division had also arrived at the St. Bernard hospice, but the first consul did not leave Lausanne till the 19th, so that the romance of his making the passage over the St. Bernard at the head of his troops is incorrect. The enthusiastic admiration of David has placed Bonaparte on horseback, wrapped in a classic cloak, like Cæsar in the midst of his legions, but the real truth is that when Bonaparte crossed the summit the army had passed on three days before and only the rearguard remained.

From his headquarters he had news at every point of the march over the Alps. He could follow Suchet's operations on the Var, see Masséna shut up in Genoa, Moncey traversing the St. Gotthard. Lausanne was his proper post, while his young soldiers under Lannes were scaling the steep rocks. When all the troops were on the march, Bonaparte skirted the lake as far as Villeneuve; then, taking the St. Pierre route through the mountains, he arrived on the evening of the 20th at the monastery of St. Bernard.

The army crossed the mountain with wonderful courage, but the soldiers' imagination had exaggerated the perils and fatigues. The stories told have nothing of the marvellous in them. When one has become accustomed to glacier climbing, what were the fatigues of such an expedition to the old brigades accustomed to wonders and privations? Astonishment was only for young soldiers — for the conscript who came from Dijon or the Carrousel reviews. One of these wrote as follows:

"We have at last scaled the St. Bernard, and here we are on the other side in Piedmont. Our half brigade left yesterday at one o'clock for the St. Pierre camp to scale that famous mountain where it is necessary to go single file on account of the rocks and the great quantity of snow. This St. Bernard is of an incredible height: sixty to eighty feet of snow covers the road at certain parts, enormous water-falls pass under this ice frozen for centuries; one fears at every step to be engulfed. Happily for me I was in the advance guard with the three companies of carbineers I commanded,

NAPOLEON CROSSING THE ALPS

(From the painting by Midy)

and we arrived at the summit at nine in the morning. Bonaparte had given orders that there should be at the convent (the only house for six leagues) wine for the troops, and each soldier had a half bottle. Although wrapped up in my cloak I was almost frozen and shivered like a man attacked by fever. I left at eleven and made in less than three hours the five leagues between here and the mountain top. I did the first league in less than a quarter of an hour. I went down by the steepest side, which ended in a little lake, the ice on which they assured me was twenty-five feet thick. I slid down on the snow, and all the soldiers, following, not daring to remain on their feet as I had done, placed themselves on their backs and slid down to the bottom.

"We came through winter, for I have never known such terrible cold. Snow and ice fell at short intervals as in the month of December. Half an hour later, having gone down much lower, the snow left us and we might have thought ourselves in the spring season. The air was soft, grass was to be seen, also a few flowers. Another half hour, always descending, the heat was stifling and we were in midsummer, so that in less than an hour we had gone through the three seasons, winter, spring, and summer. Then to complete the year, my servant, whom I had sent to reconnoitre, found some excellent wine at a farm a quarter of a mile from the camp, so I tasted the best autumn fruits in as comfortable a manner as though under the vine trellises of Burgundy.

"Before climbing the St. Bernard 2,600 livres were offered to our soldiers if they would get up two pieces of cannon of eight and one of four bore, with four cases of ammunition. The proposition was accepted. The cannon, etc., were taken to pieces, and the ammunition unpacked. Some carried wheels, some other parts; the carbineers carried cases or dragged the cannon on hollow trees, and everything arrived the same time as ourselves, without any losses. One cannon of eight bore stuck in the snow, but ropes and strong arms extricated it. Soon after they came along to tell us that the 2,600 livres would be given in the artillery ground, where we had put the cannon and remounted them ready for the journey. The carbineers and scouts would not take the money, and charged the commander to inform the first consul that they had done it not for interest but for the honour and prosperity of the army."

This account, evidently dictated by the astonishment of an imaginative enthusiast, presents no circumstance, no incident, that could alarm men accustomed to crossing the Alps. The army had seen glaciers and century-old snow; had experienced the rapid change of temperature — that sudden rush from spring to summer. Dugommier had seen it in the Pyrenees, Masséna in the German Alps, and everyone knows it who has visited the glacier region. What really was wonderful in this expedition was the courage of these young men who everywhere attacked the Austrian posts with an intrepidity worthy of olden times. Hardly was the St. Bernard passed, when the two half brigades, full of ardour, fell on the bridge of Aosta: the Loison division gained this first and splendid victory. It had crossed the mountain after unheard-of efforts. A few moments' rest, and behold, the silent valley of Aosta was theirs! The division made on foot a further march of six leagues, and saw Châtillon crowning the heights. The 12th Hussars climbed the heights; the castle of Bara was surrounded, and cannon sprang up as if by magic upon the rocks and peaks. General Loison, seeing he could not take the castle, resolved to get the artillery past it in the night, even though under fire from the castle. Marmont

presided over all these operations. The cannon were placed on sledges with straw and hay, so that no noise should be made.

The first consul had not yet left the mountains; all these operations were done independently of him and under the orders of Lannes and Berthier. Bonaparte did not cross the St. Bernard until the 20th or 21st; he arrived before Ivrea just as General Lannes was taking it, the 23rd of May. Here occurred the first serious fight. Two entire divisions took part. The passage was defended by five thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry. At Ivrea the road divides. To the right is Turin, to the left Milan, the great capital of Lombardy. Lannes took the Piedmont road with the advance guard, marching on the Po from the Susa side, and taking possession of this point. Murat marched quickly into Vercelli, whilst the body of the reserves debouched on the Milan high-road, and the outposts approached Novara. At Vercelli the first consul established his headquarters, having Turin at his right and Milan in front of him.[e]

MASSÉNA YIELDS GENOA

While Napoleon was conquering the Alps, famine was conquering Masséna at Genoa. One must imagine a town of seventy thousand souls blockaded for sixty days, no provisions coming in from outside after the first day; to picture the streets encumbered with dead and dying; people disputing over horses dead of disease, dogs, cats, and unclean animals, even grass in the gardens, to get even a faint idea of the sufferings in Genoa during this cruel blockade. The population, six times more numerous than the army, exasperated by suffering, began to revolt, and the troops were so worn out that the sentinels could no longer watch except seated, their arms by their sides. Masséna's energy redoubled, and he displayed a superhuman activity. Sharing the common suffering, his force of soul supported him physically, but his hair went white in a few days.

At length there was only one ration left for each man. All that could be endured had been endured with patience and loyalty. Masséna was obliged to evacuate the town on conditions worthy of him. Following the convention signed on the 4th of June, the handful of soldiers who had survived returned to France by land or sea with their arms and baggage. It surpassed in length and suffering the defence of Genoa by Boufflers in 1746.

Called the "saviour of the republic" in the last campaign, Masséna augmented his title to national gratitude by prolonging his resistance ten days beyond the time fixed by the first consul, and, in spite of the distance, by his powerful co-operation in the victory of Marengo. This defence did not, however, satisfy Bonaparte completely. Later, he made out that Masséna need not have been blockaded in Genoa if he had put the mass of his forces on the march at the beginning of the campaign. But to do that the line of communication with Nice would have had to be broken, and this he had been particularly told to guard. Moreover, how would Masséna have fed the army? Bonaparte blamed him also for not having rallied the centre at Finale under Suchet, and pursued the corps of Ellsnitz by marching on Alessandria at the head of the reserves; as if he could have mobilised eight thousand men exhausted by a two months' famine and deprived of artillery and ammunition! However, as Masséna had become indispensable to him for re-organising the remnant of the Italian army and the reserves, the first consul hid his grievances and after the interview at Milan made Masséna commander-in-chief.[f]

Bonaparte had followed the course of the Dora and the Po, entered Milan and Pavia, and seized all the letters and communications passing betwixt Melas and Vienna.

The Austrian general had already retrograded; he could not credit the report of Bonaparte's being in Italy. He sent a trusted messenger to learn; and the messenger for a thousand louis betrayed to the French a complete account of the force and positions of their enemy. What above all astonished Melas was to hear the French cannon: how had they passed the Alps? Bonaparte's arrival at Milan, itself a triumph, and felt as such by his army, took place on the 2nd of June. Moncey was to join him with reinforcements from the army of Switzerland. He in the meantime despatched his lieutenants to seize the towns on the Po, which was effected. Murat in taking Piacenza intercepted a courier who bore tidings of the fall of Genoa. This misfortune left Bonaparte no object save that of marching upon Melas, and defeating him in battle. The Austrian general concentrated his force at Alessandria; whilst Ott, his lieutenant, after having reduced Genoa, marched to surprise the advance posts of the French as they passed the Po. He was met by Lannes at Montebello, and a severe engagement ensued, the forerunner of the great one. Ott and O'Reilly were completely beaten by Lannes, and driven back upon Melas, with the loss of five thousand men. It was in memory of this action that Lannes afterwards bore the title of Duke de Montebello.

The French army now advanced to Stradella, taking up an advantageous position in case of attack. It remained several days in these quarters, to allow Suchet time to close on Melas from the rear, and Masséna, with the liberated garrison of Genoa, to join from the south. The Austrians showed no sign of movement, and Bonaparte found that Melas might escape him by marching either north towards Turin, or south towards Genoa. Rather than allow this, he advanced into the plains of Marengo; thereby giving great advantage to his enemies, who were on the other side of the Bormida, at liberty to attack at their choice or defend the course of the stream. So little activity did Melas show, that Bonaparte's anxiety was increased lest he might escape to Genoa, and shut himself up there; where, with the English, masters of the sea, he might hold out an almost unlimited time. With this fear he detached Desaix, just arrived from Egypt, on his left, to provide against and prevent any such movement of Melas — a precaution that was near proving fatal to the French; for the Austrian at the same moment had decided in a council of war that the only secure mode of reaching Genoa was to give battle to the French.[1]

The morning of the 14th, destined by Melas for the attack, found the French not drawn up in line to receive them, but *échelloné*, or thrown back, in separate divisions, with considerable intervals betwixt them, extending from Marengo, the village next the Bormida and the Austrians and occupied by the French advance guards, to their headquarters at San Giuliano. The Austrians crossed the river by three divisions and three bridges. One cause of the security of Bonaparte was the assurance that the principal of these bridges had been broken. The Austrians' attack convinced him of the contrary; its first effort was against the French at Marengo. Instead of marching boldly to the charge, the imperials deployed, planted batteries, and waited to effect by their fire what an assault might have accomplished. This afforded time to the French, and allowed Bonaparte to recall Desaix.

[1 The chances were greatly in favour of the Austrians, as they were superior in numbers and had three times as many cavalry as the French. — HAZLITT.g]

The right and left of the Austrians had scarcely an enemy to contend with. Chiefly composed of cavalry, they swept all obstacles before them, and turning towards the centre at Marengo, completely expelled the enemy from that village.[d]

THE TIDE TURNED AT MARENGO (JUNE 14TH, 1800)

The imperial troops, as a result of their brilliant successes, became absolutely careless, and, O'Reilly having forced a battalion to lay down their arms at Casina-bianca and the troops being thoroughly exhausted, a long rest was decided upon before continuing the march, the officers in command of the imperial army judging that the conflict was over, for that day at least. Melas, having had two horses shot under him and being slightly wounded, thought it best on account of his age to retire to Alessandria, from where he could send the joyful tidings of victory to Vienna, Turin, and Genoa. The command now fell to Zach, who under the firm conviction that he was pursuing a fugitive host relaxed his discipline to such an extent that the soldiers, greedy for booty, refused on several occasions to obey orders. Towards three o'clock in the afternoon, Zach gave orders to resume the march.

Bonaparte, beginning to despair of being joined by Desaix, had already decided to retreat. But between four and five o'clock the advance guard of Desaix reached San Giuliano, and Bonaparte immediately resolved to proceed to the attack. Victor, who had again collected three thousand men, was already in San Giuliano; Lannes reopened the artillery fire at La Buschetta on Ott's slowly approaching column, while Rivaud harried their left flank. Desaix made a sortie from San Giuliano. All the remaining troops were placed in the reserve and occupied a position outside the village. Meanwhile, the first consul sought to inspire his disheartened troops with renewed courage as he rode proudly through the ranks calling out: "We have withdrawn far enough for to-day. You know I always sleep on the battlefield."

The second battle began and Marmont unmasked a battery of twelve cannon which belched forth a destructive fire. Desaix, at the head of the 9th light half-brigade, supported by Victor, dashed forward on Saint-Julien, only to meet his death by one of the first shots fired;[1] and he sank lifeless into the arms of General Lebrun. This sudden and unexpected attack took the imperial troops completely by surprise. The battalion of the first division wavered and fell back. The artillery retreated after a few shots, and even the cavalry were dismayed as the combat rapidly developed in intensity.

This was Kellermann's opportunity. Protected by a thick leafage of vines that overgrew a closely planted plantation of mulberry trees, he led his 600 horsemen into the high-road and here, diverging to the left, advanced on the imperial infantry, whilst his rear squadron completely routed the panic-stricken Lichtenstein dragoons. The capture of General Zach and 37 officers with 16,257 men was the outcome of this bold act. Saint-Julien escaped a similar fate only through the sacrifice of some dragoons, who alone possessed sufficient courage to meet the French. Kellermann did not rest one moment in his career of victory, but, reinforced by a regiment of the Champeaux brigade and the cavalry of the guard, he took up the pursuit, and about a mile and a half beyond La Ventolina came upon Nobili's cavalry who, without offering the slightest resistance, fled in utter confusion and over-ran a detachment of their own men. Nothing but the fast approaching darkness saved the remains of this once proud regiment of cavalry from complete destruction. At the shrill cry, "To the bridge!" even the infantry took to flight. The resistance of the imperials at Marengo was soon overcome. They managed, however, to hold the village against Boudet until the larger part at least of their conquered army had reached the left bank of the Bormida. We can estimate the utter confusion that prevailed among the fleeing troops from the fact that 20 forsaken cannon were found in the bed of the river.

[1] As he advanced at the head of a troop of two hundred men, he was shot through the heart by a ball, and fell dead at the instant he had given the word to charge. By his death Napoleon was deprived of the man whom he esteemed most worthy to be his second in the field. He shed tears for his loss, never speaking of him afterwards without regret; and he was one of those who he believed would have remained faithful to him to the last. His death did not disconcert the troops, but inspired them with greater ardour to avenge it. General Boudet led them on. The 9th light demi-brigade did indeed prove itself worthy of the title of "incomparable."[g]

The victorious French army now encamped in their former quarters. The imperials' loss was officially estimated at 252 officers and 6,229 men killed and wounded; 1 general, 74 officers and 2,846 men taken prisoners; 13 cannon captured, 20 lost in the Bormida. Jomini[h] reported that the army of reserve had lost 7,000 men, dead and wounded, and 1,000 taken prisoners in the first battle. The army bulletin maintains that the returns gave only 1,100 men killed, 3,600 wounded and 900 taken prisoners. According to a Prussian authority, Bonaparte, in the long course of his victorious career, never had so small a personal share in a battle and never gave so little proof of his usually brilliant talent as in this battle, which is generally placed in the front row of his deeds of arms.

The night following the bloody victory brought no rest to the aged imperial commander-in-chief. Wounded, and deprived of his principal adviser, he gave himself up to despair. His subordinate officers seemed to have completely lost their wits. Only a few of them thought of reorganising the remains of the troops under their command and of providing them with rations and ammunition. The greater number of the staff and general officers loudly bewailed their lost baggage. On the morning of June 15th, Melas called a fresh council of war. Opinions were divided at this meeting. Some blamed Zach and the ministry of war, and demanded of those powerless factors efficient aid. A few undaunted men wished once more to try their fortune in the field. The possibility of escaping to Milan or Genoa was suggested, but this attempt might lead to a still greater catastrophe. As a last resort there remained the fortress of Mantua, which the majority of the convention hoped to reach in safety, under the pretext of holding a council with Napoleon. This plan, dictated by cowardice and convenience, finally triumphed, and it was resolved to treat with Bonaparte, who at that moment was at the head of barely 18,000 men.

Zach returned to Alessandria accompanied by Berthier in order to close the convention, by the terms of which the imperials made an almost unconditional surrender of half Italy. The battle awarded to the victor the possession of 12 fortresses, 1,500 cannon, and enormous magazines.[i]

Thus, the battle of Marengo, "so far lost at midday," says Savary,[j] later duke of Rovigo, "that a charge of cavalry would forever have decided it, was restored, and gained by six o'clock in the evening." The charge of young Kellermann, later duke de Valmy, was the decisive movement. The partisans of Bonaparte assert that the order issued from him. Kellermann himself protested it was his own unsupported act; and a strong feeling of

jealousy existed, in consequence, betwixt him and the first consul. "That charge of yours was opportune," observed Bonaparte after the battle, in rather a lukewarm tone of praise. "Opportune indeed," replied the fiery little Kellermann, "it has put the crown upon your head."

The consequence of this campaign of a few days were as important as those of the long struggle of 1796. An armistice was agreed on, the terms of which were that the Austrians should retire behind the Mincio, thus abandoning all the conquests of Suvaroff; besides, Genoa no sooner was retaken than resurrendered. France reaped, at a blow, her old superiority in the field; and Bonaparte was marked anew by the hand of destiny as the candidate for the vacant throne. His return to Paris was one continued triumph. The whole population lined the roads: the beauties of Lyons and Dijon crowded round him, at the risk of being trodden down by his steed. Paris was in equal tumult of admiration and joy. A short time subsequent to his return occurred the 14th of July, the anniversary of the federation, of the birth of freedom and the Revolution. He feared not to celebrate it in the Champ-de-Mars. Here, where the deputies from all France had met to swear their solemn vows to liberty on the altar of the country, a military dictator now rode amidst his guard, bearing the Austrian colours taken at Marengo. The acclamations, the enthusiasm, at either epoch was the same; the object alone was different. It had been then an abstract name; it was now a substantial idol, a hero, calculated to take strong hold on the affections of the people, who with their wonted obliquity of vision, still saw in him the representative of what they called liberty and the Revolution.

The convention with Melas was considered preparatory to a treaty. Bonaparte offered to Austria the terms of Campo-Formio; but the court of Vienna, which unfortunately was gifted with that vigour in despair which was ever wanting to her in prosperity, pleaded her engagements with Great Britain as precluding her from treating, except in conjunction with this latter country. The French had an apt rejoinder: "Let there be an armistice, then, by sea, as well as by land." But this would have given too great an advantage to the French. Egypt would have been succoured, and the whole system of naval war deranged, and England would not listen to the proposal; and Austria, with a heroism worthy of better fortune, persisted in renewing hostilities. Italy as a field had been unfavourable to her. She turned to Germany.[d]

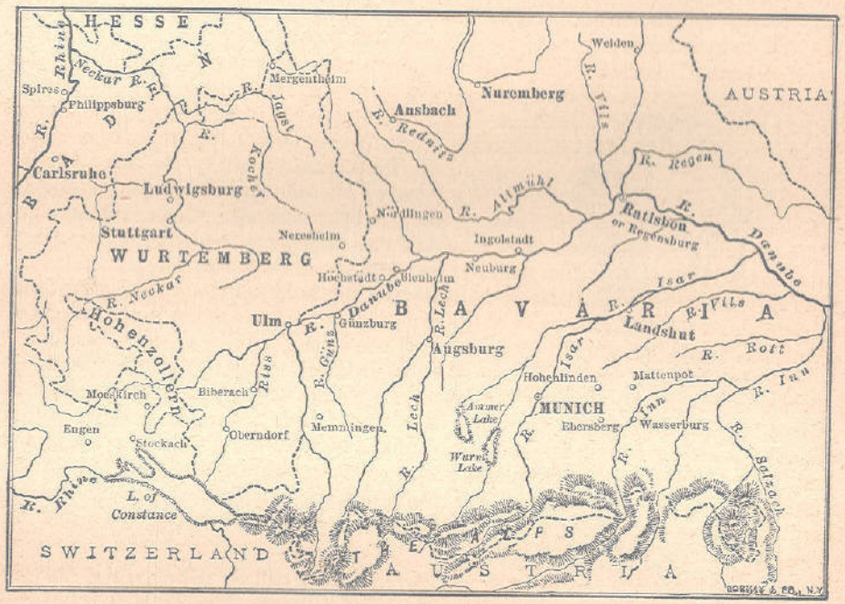
BONAPARTE'S JEALOUSY OF MOREAU

When England and Austria refused his overtures, Bonaparte had the good fortune of getting precisely what he wanted, *viz.*, war, in precisely the way he wished, that is, as apparently forced upon him. This war is peculiar in the circumstance that throughout its course Bonaparte has a military rival with whom he is afraid to break, and who keeps pace with him in achievements — Moreau. To Moreau the success of Brumaire had been mainly due, and he had perhaps thought that the new constitution, as it did not seem to contemplate the first consul commanding an army, had removed Bonaparte from the path of his ambition. He now held the command of the principal army, that of the Rhine, in which post Bonaparte could not venture to supersede him.

The problem for Bonaparte throughout the war was to prevent Moreau, and in a less degree Masséna, who was now in command of the army of Italy, from eclipsing his own military reputation. He did not, however, succeed in tearing from Moreau the honour of concluding the war. Marengo

did not lead to peace; this was won, where naturally it could only be won, in Bavaria by Moreau's victory of Hohenlinden (December 3rd) — a victory perhaps greater than any of which at that time Bonaparte could boast.

Never was Bonaparte more recklessly audacious, never was he more completely and undeservedly successful, than in this campaign. Brumaire had given him a very uncertain position. Sieyès and the republicans were on the watch for him on the one side; Moreau seemed on the point of eclipsing him on the other. His family felt their critical position; "had he fallen at Marengo," writes Lucien,[l] "we should have been all proscribed." Perhaps



MAP ILLUSTRATING MOREAU'S CAMPAIGN IN GERMANY

nothing but a stroke so rapid and startling as that of Marengo could have saved him from these difficulties. But this did more, and developed the empire out of the consulate.[c]

MOREAU'S CAMPAIGN IN GERMANY (1800 A.D.)

Moreau had chosen as his lieutenant-generals Gouvion-Saint-Cyr, Lecourbe, Grouchy, Ney, Decaen, and Richepanse, all men of tried strength and valour, all worthy of following such a captain. The entire French army numbered from 90,000 to 95,000 men, and the enemy had an equal number of fighters. The Russians had abandoned the Austrians, and the archduke Charles, worthy emulator of Moreau, had been replaced by General Baron von Kray. The junction of the troops, although difficult owing to the respective position of each, was executed according to a skilfully drawn-up plan. Moreau, by certain movements and feigned attacks, confounded the plans of General Kray in every respect, and took the offensive. He found the enemy at Engen. The plateau which dominated Engen was taken and

retaken five times (May 2nd). At last, about six o'clock in the evening, after a most vigorous resistance, the Austrians abandoned a battle-field strewn with 4,000 dead, and left in the hands of the enemy 8,000 prisoners, standards, and many cannon. Moreau had achieved his end in breaking through the formidable line from Engen to Stockach.

Kray precipitately retired on Moeskirch. Moreau, who followed him closely, attacked him at daybreak and by skilful manœuvring carried off a long-disputed but complete victory. He had four horses killed under him, and received a spent bullet in his chest. The enemy crossed the Danube. Moreau sent General Gouvion-Saint-Cyr towards Biberach. This general, having met the enemy at Oberndorf, attacked them in spite of their superior position, overthrew them in the Riss ravine, captured Biberach, and entered Memmingen.

MARSHAL NEY
(1769–1815)

Kray made a movement on Günzburg. Moreau beat him back to the other side of the Danube, and crossed this river himself at the end of a manœuvre as clever as fortunate. Moreau resolved to force him away from Ulm by a bold stratagem, which was to separate him from his magazines. The Austrian general, dismayed by this manœuvre, was obliged to retreat or give battle. Moreau had neither boats nor pontoons. But two swimmers, followed by two boats carrying their arms, crossed the Danube at Blenheim, and took possession of two cannon, which they loaded and turned against the enemy, thus making it possible to repair the bridges, over which passed two French divisions. Moreau beat the Austrians near Höchstädt, then at Neresheim, pursuing them as far as Nördlingen. The two armies were facing one another after this last move. The gunners opened with a terrific fire, and the signal for a charge was given, when all at once the trumpets sounded a recall. The firing ceased, the rumour of an armistice, precursor of a peace, was spread, and immediately the French and Austrians shook hands and embraced. Casks of wine and beer were rolled on to the field so lately a scene of carnage, and the two armies gave themselves up to joy and confidence. Moreau did not know of the suspension of hostilities which had just been concluded in Italy. Kray, in communicating it to him, demanded an armistice; these palavers deceived the troops. Moreau, not wishing to give the Austrians time to establish themselves in Bavaria, where they would have disputed his entrance, refused to accept the armistice and sent off a considerable force to Munich, with orders to make all speed. Kray halted at Neuburg, where he was again defeated in spite of the fierce onslaught of his troops. He gained Ingolstadt, which Moreau also forced him to abandon, as well as the position he took up at Landshut, leaving only a feeble garrison in that place. General Decaen, who had hurried by forced marches to Munich,

arrived at his destination and took possession of the capital of Bavaria, after having covered thirty leagues in three days, and having fought three battles *en route*.

Moreau marched on victoriously, each success was the forerunner of another; all fled before him, and Kray, yielding to his rival's superior talent, no longer tried to hold his own. Moreau was adored by the men whom he always led to victory, and esteemed by those who submitted to his arms because he always respected their usages, customs, and religion. He was admired and feared by his enemies and acquired an astonishing celebrity. The Germans uttered his name with a kind of religious awe.

General Kray was disgraced, and Archduke John replaced him. This was the emperor's brother, a young prince not exactly calculated to distinguish himself in warfare, so he was directed by Lieutenant-General Baron von Lauer.

The preliminaries, signed by Bonaparte and Count Saint-Julien, not having been yet ratified by the Austrian emperor, Moreau wrote to the archduke John that he was going to recommence hostilities unless he consented to a one month armistice and gave back Philippsburg, Ulm, and Ingolstadt to the French as guarantee of a definite peace. Francis II consented. But the English cabinet, as we have seen, were interested in a continuance of the war and used their influence at the Austrian court, persuading the emperor to try his fortunes again in war. Orders were immediately despatched by the Vienna cabinet to raise new troops and reorganise the army

THE BATTLE OF HOHENLINDEN (DECEMBER 3RD, 1800)

Moreau had profited by the suspension of hostilities to go to Paris; but, informed of what was passing in Austria, he hastened back to his headquarters at Munich. His aim was to make Archduke John give battle near the Inn, in the village of Hohenlinden in Bavaria, a place then little known, but since rendered immortal by the great valour of the French and the strategy of Moreau.

Moreau first made a strong division pass between the centre and the left wing of the enemy's army, and, although General Baron von Lauer had been warned of this, he refused to believe that so considerable a force could make its way across marshes, woods, and very difficult roads. Vainly was he twice warned. He would not believe it until the French division lay between his advance-guard and the centre of his army. Then, driven in spite of himself to give battle, he came on to Hohenlinden. General Grouchy carried his left wing to the left of the village. Generals Decaen and Richepanse, at the moment of attack, were to attack the rearguard of the enemy. Moreau was skilful enough to keep the prince in such a position as to insure his complete defeat. As soon as he perceived the Austrian army falter he was sure General Richepanse had begun his flank attack, and immediately assumed the offensive. General Ney and his troops came pouring through the defiles of Mattenpot, joining with General Richepanse as Moreau had himself arranged. Towards the left of the Hohenlinden forest the enemy defended themselves with cannon and a sustained musketry fire. The Hungarian grenadiers formed in squares and charged. General Richepanse, although separated from the main body and having only five battalions and one regiment of chasseurs, rushed on the enemy and routed all he met. Meanwhile General Ney came out of a pass towards Hohenlinden, and pursued a large column which had taken refuge in the forest.

Soon nothing was heard save the cries of wounded and fugitives begging for mercy. The highway, bristling but an hour before with thousands of armed men, was now covered with the dead bodies of men and horses, with frightened horses careering about riderless, and overturned gun-carriages. In the midst of this frightful *mêlée*, this sanguinary disorder, the generals Ney and Richepanse, whose columns had been gradually drawing near each other, met at last on the field of battle. Thenceforward the enemy had no chance. In vain an Austrian corps marched from Wasserburg upon Ebersberg; General Decaen threw it back in disorder. The archduke John wanted to try another attack upon Hohenlinden, but Moreau was expecting this and had left behind two divisions and a mass of cavalry, which met the enemy in a furious charge and accomplished its final overthrow.

It was fearful weather; snow fell in huge flakes all that day and on into the night. There was hardly a regiment some of whose men were not frost-bitten. The roads were also destroyed by rain; yet the movements and attacks had been so well planned by Moreau that not one of them failed. The enemy was in a deplorable state of disorder. The archduke and his counsellor Lauer were so disconcerted that they gave no orders. Each Austrian general saved what he could of the troops remaining to him. Night put an end to the pursuit, and many detachments of the enemy bivouacked among the French soldiers. The trophies of this memorable day were 10,000 prisoners, among them 3 generals and the *élite* of the Austrian grenadiers, with about 84 cannon and guns.

Moreau had planned things so well that he lost only 1,200 men, not counting the wounded, while the loss of the Austrian army in killed and wounded amounted to 10,000 men. War, which too often hardens men, could not hurt the mind of Moreau the conqueror. He considered it such a scourge that on the very evening of the memorable battle of Hohenlinden, he spoke these words: "We have had enough bloodshed; let our efforts now be towards making peace."[k]

THE ATTEMPT ON NAPOLEON'S LIFE (DECEMBER 24TH, 1800)

On the 24th of December, Bonaparte left the Tuileries in company with several of his generals to go to the opera where an oratorio was to be given. The escort composed of mounted grenadiers followed the carriage instead of preceding it, as had formerly been done. That circumstance probably was the means of saving the first consul's life. When the carriage arrived in the rue St. Nicaise, not far from the rue du Carrousel, the way was found to be encumbered with a wagon and a hackney coach, but the first consul's driver skilfully and quickly threaded his way between the wagon and the wall. The escort had done the same, when suddenly a frightful detonation was heard, windows and doors were shattered and houses overthrown. The first consul's carriage was so broken that it rested on the axles and had all its windows smashed. "They have mined us," exclaimed Bonaparte. After making inquiries as to the escort, of which only one soldier had been wounded, he gave orders to proceed to the opera-house where he showed himself as calm and imperturbable as ordinarily, in spite of the excitement and shouts of the spectators rejoiced to see him escaped from so great a danger. This calm, however, did not last; as soon as he returned to the Tuileries and learned all the details of this frightful attempt, his anger burst out in threats against the Jacobins and Septembrists to whom he attributed the crime. He would not listen to Fouché, who rightly attributed it to the royalists. By a consular decree, which the senate hastened to endorse, three hundred individuals were imprisoned without trial.

Fouché nevertheless was on the track of the real culprits. He made the discovery by chance. The cab-drivers, in testimony of their admiration for the consul's coachman, entertained him at a complimentary dinner. In the confidence generated by conviviality, one of the guests, in toasting the hero's skill, said he knew perfectly well who had played this trick on him. This coachman was arrested and gave evidence about the wagon which he had seen in a coach-house. The matter was gone into, and in the end two agents of Georges Cadoudal, Saint-Rejant and Carbon, were arrested. Then it was found out why the plot had failed. Saint-Rejant, who fired the powder barrel, was not well instructed; he understood that the escort rode in advance of the first consul's carriage and he had allowed the first vehicle to pass by. In addition he was thrown against the wall by one of the soldier's horses, but hurried nevertheless to ignite the powder. But its action was slower than he had expected, and his machine, justly called infernal, shattered only such as had inquisitively approached to see the first consul. It is scarcely conceivable, but he had put the horse and wagon in charge of a young girl of fifteen, knowing full well that she would be blown in pieces. Saint-Rejant and Carbon were condemned to death and executed; their accomplices had found time for flight. But the three hundred Jacobins were none the less transported.[n]

THE TREATIES OF LUNÉVILLE AND FOLIGNO

The loss of the battle of Hohenlinden obliged Austria to treat. Cobenzl her plenipotentiary, came over to Paris for that purpose. The negotiations were, however, carried on at Lunéville, Joseph Bonaparte acting as the envoy of his brother. Here a treaty was concluded little differing from that of Campo-Formio.[d]

This treaty was signed the 9th of February. Austria, exhausted, accepted a separate peace, without any intervention from England or the empire. She recognised the four republics, the Batavian, Helvetian, Cisalpine, and Ligurian, as constituted by France, on the sole promise that they should remain independent. Nothing was stipulated with regard to Naples, Rome, and Piedmont. The first consul reserved to himself the right of deciding as to their fate. Austria, although keeping Venice, found herself excluded from all share in Italian affairs. Naturally this treaty was celebrated in Paris by brilliant *fêtes*. It assured to the French the possession of the left bank of the Rhine, and immediately the tribunate hastened to declare the Rhenish provinces annexed to France. These provinces were the four departments of Roer, Sarre, Rhin-et-Moselle, and Mont-Tonnerre. Unfortunately, Bonaparte organised nothing very lasting beyond the Alps. He left Austria humiliated and with rage in her heart, and if he reserved to himself the right of regulating the destinies of Italy, it was not to give her a durable constitution but to use her as a stepping stone in carrying out his further projects. He did not really think of her, but of himself — of his own ambition; but this ambition bade fair to make him ultimately lose all conquests won.

Brune had detached three French columns which invaded Tuscany under various pretexts, or for the purpose of repelling Neapolitan troops. They had treated it like a conquered country, and at Leghorn they had captured some supplies and some English ships. Bonaparte refused to listen to the urgent and well-founded complaints made on this subject by Cobenzl; he wished to make Tuscany into a kingdom of Etruria for the prince of Parma, whom

he might compel to close it against the English. On the 21st of March he concluded with Spain the treaty he had been negotiating for some months, with this object in view, and by which he obtained in exchange the cession of Louisiana to France; while Spain agreed to compel Portugal to recede from her English alliance even at the cost of invading her.

The Roman states were maintained in their integrity. As bishop of Imola, Pius VII had expressed conciliatory sentiments and the desire to put an end to the disputes between the church and the Revolution. These sentiments had perhaps not been without their share in his election. Bonaparte, on his side, had a fixed intention of re-establishing religion in France, a restoration which he judged necessary to complete the return to the normal order of things. He had already declared himself at Milan on the subject of his determination to restore the altars. He had even summoned Monsignor Spina, archbishop of Corinth, to Paris, that he might arrange with him respecting the means of carrying it out. For these reasons Murat, who commanded an advanced corps in Tuscany, received orders to avoid offending the holy see, and to exact only that the ports of Roman states should be closed against the English.

As to the sovereigns in Naples, Napoleon thought at first of dethroning them, because of their intimate relations with the English. He thought for a while of giving Naples to the duke of Parma in exchange for Etruria, but renounced the idea, having need to propitiate Russia, who had taken Queen Carolina under her protection. Murat went to Foligno, where an armistice was signed, but changed into a definite treaty on the 28th of March. The court of Naples, unable to resist, submitted to the conqueror. The states were restored to them on condition that they shut their ports to the English, and yield their share in the island of Elba and the *Presidios*, which France had reserved to herself in her arrangements with Spain and Etruria. Finally they were to arm three frigates, and shelter ten thousand French soldiers near the Gulf of Taranto; these would then be ready to succour Egypt if necessary. Piedmont was held in reserve for future uses and plans.[m]

AN ARMISTICE

Whilst the new century opened under such prosperous auspices for the French, fortune had never seemed more menacing to Great Britain. In Austria she lost her last continental ally. Portugal had been invaded, and compelled to renounce her friendship with England. Paul, emperor of Russia, having passed suddenly from enmity to admiration of France, concluded a treaty with Bonaparte; and, in conjunction with the Baltic powers, now became a party to the Armed Neutrality [December 16th, 1800], to resist England's right of search upon the seas.[1] On her own element, however, that country was mistress still. Her fleet, under Sir Hyde Parker, or rather under his lieutenant, Nelson, entered the sound, and destroyed the Danish navy in the harbour of Copenhagen. The death of Paul at the same time deprived her of a formidable enemy; and marred, for the time, the plan of the French ruler for excluding her from the ports of Europe. Prussia, the self-

[1 The idea of a union among the neutral powers in opposition to the intolerable allegation of England that she was entitled, when at war with any power whatsoever, to subject the ships of all neutral powers to examination and search, had been relinquished by the empress Catherine in 1781, to please the English ambassador at her court; the emperor Paul now resumed the idea. — SCHLOSSER.[o] The fuller details of this opposition to a naval principle of England which brought about the War of 1812 with America, will be found in the history of England, and also in the histories of the other countries concerned.]

ish Prussia, which had taken the opportunity to invade Hanover, was compelled to evacuate it. Malta fell into the power of England: Egypt was menaced: and the rival powers, sinking into the attitude of languid and inactive defiance proper to two exhausted combatants, agreed to allow each other a breathing time of truce at least; although the causes of quarrel and enmity were too profound to be removed, except by the absolute prostration of one or the other.

Whilst England in 1801 was bent on her Egyptian expedition, the first consul was employed in organising and consolidating his government. Bonaparte dreaded the Jacobins far more than the royalists. "Emigration and Vendéeism are but eruptions of the skin," said he; "terrorism is an internal malady." The attempt of the infernal machine had enabled the first consul to establish special military commissions for trying similar offences. It was on this occasion that the opposition first revealed itself in the tribunate and legislative body. Though chosen by the senate, itself appointed by the first consul, the members of these assemblies were still the children of the Revolution, averse to arbitrary power established by law, however they might excuse and admire its action from expediency; and inspired with a far greater hatred to aristocracy than to tyranny. Thus the first consul obtained with far more ease their consent to his unlimited authority over personal freedom, and even over the press, than their acquiescence in allowing the émigrés to return, in re-establishing religion, and in other acts of justice and expediency.

THE CONCORDAT RE-ESTABLISHES A STATE RELIGION (1801 A.D.)

Bonaparte, however, pursued his plan of reorganising the monarchy, with its higher ranks, its hierarchy, and all the necessary machinery for holding together and moving the body politic. His first enterprise was to re-establish the Catholic religion, as not only tolerated but instituted by the state. He had spared the pope with this in view; and the year 1801 was spent in negotiating a *concordat* or agreement with Rome. No doubt policy was in this affair the motive of Bonaparte. His counsellors opposed the idea. "Hearken," said Bonaparte to one of them during a promenade at Malmaison: "I was here last Sunday, walking in this solitude amidst the silence of nature. The sound of the church bells of Ruel suddenly struck upon my ears. I was moved, and said, If I am thus affected, what must be the influence of those ideas upon the simple and credulous mass! The people must have a religion; and that religion must be in the hands of the government." After divers commonplace assertions, the counsellor, waiving the broad question of religion or no religion, objected at least to Catholicism. "It is intolerant; its clergy are counter-revolutionary; the spirit of the present time is entirely opposed to it. And, after all, we, in our thoughts and principles, are nearer to the true spirit of the gospel than the Catholics, who affect to reverence it." Here Bonaparte urged that, by his leaning to Protestantism, one half of France might embrace it, but the other half would remain Catholic; and weakness, not strength, would be gained to both nation and government. "Let them call me papist if they will. I am no such thing. I was a Mohammedan in Egypt, and I will be Catholic here, for the good of the people."

Bonaparte succeeded in gaining from the pope a concordat, by which, in return for a decree declaring the Catholic religion that "of the great majority of the French," and undertaking to give salaries to the clergy, the pon-

tiff agreed to consecrate such bishops as the French government should nominate; to give up all claim to the old church lands; and to order a form of prayer for the consuls, to whom the new bishops were to swear allegiance. The court of Rome thus showed itself obsequious, secularising Bishop Talleyrand at the same time, by Bonaparte's desire. But it was from the nation, at least from the eminent personages, that resistance was to be expected. The theophilanthropists raised the no-popery cry. The soldiers were indignant. It was on Easter Sunday, 1802, that a *Te Deum* was celebrated at Notre Dame by Cardinal Caprara, in commemoration of the re-establishment of the church. The first consul attended, surrounded by his officers. On his return he asked several what they thought of the ceremony. "A pretty *capucinade*," replied Delman; "there was merely wanting the million of men, who have perished in overthrowing all you have built up." The first consul soon after observed to Rapp, his aide-de-camp, who was a Protestant, "You will go to mass now?" "Not I." "Why not?" "These things may do very well for you. They don't concern me, unless you should take these people for aides-de-camp or cooks."[1]

THE FRENCH LOSE EGYPT

Whilst the French, triumphant over the continental powers, were obliged to rest on their arms, regarding England with inactive enmity, the latter country had resolved manfully to put forth its strength, and send an army to Egypt. Malta was already in their power. The French force in Egypt, though formidable, was little anxious to defend the country, and looked rather to the hope of escape. Kléber, who had been left with the command, had, in 1800, proposed to evacuate Egypt; and Sir Sidney Smith, the admiral commanding in the Mediterranean, had concluded an agreement with him to this effect. But the Austrians at that time still held out, and the British government could not allow the veteran army of Egypt to reinforce the army opposed to her. The capitulation entered into betwixt Kléber and Sir Sidney was accordingly refused to be ratified, and war continued in Africa. A Turkish army advanced from Syria, which was met and defeated by Kléber in the plains of Heliopolis. That rude but talented leader soon after fell a victim to an Arab assassin in his quarters at Cairo;[2] and the command devolved upon Menou, who had espoused a Turkish woman, adopted the Mohammedan religion and dress, and prefixed Abdallah to his name.

The honour of the expedition to Egypt belongs, according to Sir Walter Scott,[r] exclusively to Lord Melville, who promoted it despite the irresolution of Pitt and the reluctance of George III. The free constitution of England, and its representative system of government, proved, indeed, sadly destitute of vigour, compared with that which the tyranny of the committee of public safety, and subsequently of Bonaparte, gave to France. Even now this expedition, entered into with but half a will on the part of the government, was inferior to the French force in Egypt. "We were incontestably superior," says Savary,[j] "in cavalry and artillery." Yet with an

[1] Rapp and Savary were aides-de-camp to Desaix, adopted by Bonaparte on the field of Marengo. The latter soon made progress by his suppleness: the former was a blunt Alsatian, and became neither duke nor marshal. He once ushered a dark-looking Corsican to the presence of Bonaparte, and took care to hold the door open whilst the interview lasted. When questioned by Bonaparte why he did this, "Because," replied Rapp, "I don't put much trust in your Corsicans." The blunt remark caused much amusement.

[2] June 14th, 1801, the same day Desaix fell at Marengo.[n]]

inferior army General Abercromby was to force a landing, to take and garrison Alexandria, and then march to Cairo. Fortunately for the British, Menou wanted generalship and activity. His force was disseminated, and the British landed without opposition on the very beach which had proved fatal to the Turkish expedition. This was early in March, 1801. The garrison of Alexandria attacked the British, but were beaten back. Menou in the meantime arrived from Cairo, and mustered hastily his troops. With these he gave battle on the 21st near Alexandria.

He was defeated, driven within the walls, and soon besieged. Abercromby had fallen in the action, as well as Lanusse on the part of the French. General Hutchinson succeeded the former; and conducted the rest of the campaign, according to French testimony, with great ability. General Belliard was compelled to surrender in Cairo, Menou himself in Alexandria; on honourable conditions, however — those of being transported to France. Thus terminated Bonaparte's brilliant scheme for revolutionising the East.[d]

NAVAL AFFAIRS

Success, which had deserted the French so cruelly in Egypt, showed signs of returning to them on the sea. Admiral Ganteaume, after having for the third time endeavoured to disembark troops on the African shore, had for the third time retraced his steps without having succeeded. But during his return he had chased and captured an English vessel, and this little exploit was treated as a great triumph and immoderately rejoiced over. A few days later, Rear-Admiral Linois, one of Ganteaume's subordinates, obtained a more tangible success in the bay of Algeciras. It occurred on July 6th, 1801.

Linois had taken refuge in the harbour of Algeciras, opposite Gibraltar, with three vessels and a frigate detached from Admiral Ganteaume's squadron. There he was attacked by the English Admiral Saumarez who, with six battle-ships and one frigate, thought himself quite sure of the small French naval force. Saumarez was bitterly deceived. His fleet, battered at one and the same time by the French ships' guns and guns from the forts, experienced a complete reverse. The English ship *Hannibal* was compelled to strike her colours, four others were disabled or dismasted, and Saumarez had barely time to run his almost ruined fleet to shelter under the guns of Gibraltar.

A few days later Linois left the bay of Algeciras to make his way to Cadiz in company with the Spanish admiral, Moreno, who had joined him with six vessels. Saumarez, having effected his repairs, set out in pursuit of the Franco-Spanish fleet, and cruelly avenged upon the Spanish ships of Admiral Moreno the sanguinary reverse he had experienced at the hands of the French. A fatal occurrence forcibly helped his designs. Two Spanish ships, the *Real Carlos* and the *San Hermenegildo*, approached each other without in the darkness realising their mistake; they fought furiously together till both were blown up. Thus the French allies destroyed themselves with their own hands. But the French had that night a good share at least of the glory. The *Formidable*, still disabled by the injuries received at the battle of Algeciras, struggled successfully against three English ships. Skilfully handled by her commander, Captain Troude, she riddled the enemy's bulwarks with shot, pierced and dismasted the *Venerable*, and at daybreak sailed into Cadiz harbour, where, some hours later, she was joined by the rest of the combined fleets.[p]

NAPOLEON PLANS TO INVADE ENGLAND

Meanwhile Napoleon, relieved by the Treaty of Lunéville from all apprehensions of a serious continental struggle, bent all his attention to Great Britain, and made serious preparations for invasion on his own side of the Channel. Though not of the gigantic character which they assumed in a later period of the contest, after the renewal of the war, these efforts were of a kind to excite the serious attention of the English government. From the mouth of the Schelde to that of the Garonne, every creek and headland was fortified, so as to afford protection to the small craft which were creeping along the shore from all the ports of the kingdom, to the general rendezvous at Dunkirk and Boulogne. The latter harbour was the general point of assemblage; gunboats and flat-bottomed prams were collected in great quantities, furnaces erected for heating shot, immense batteries constructed, and every preparation made, not only for a vigorous defence, but for the most energetic offensive operations.

The fleets of Great Britain in the narrow seas were, indeed, so powerful that no attempt at invasion by open force could be made with any chance of success; but it was impossible to conceal the alarming fact that the same wind which wafted the French flotilla out of its harbours might chain the English cruisers to theirs; and the recent expeditions of Ganteaume in the Mediterranean, and of Hoche to the coast of Ireland, had demonstrated that, notwithstanding the greatest maritime superiority, it was impossible at all times to prevent a vigilant and active enemy from putting to sea during the darkness of the autumnal or winter months. It could not be denied that, even although ultimate defeat might attend a descent, incalculable confusion and distress would necessarily follow it, in the first instance. Influenced by these views, the British government prepared a powerful armament of bombs and light vessels in the Downs, and intrusted the command to Lord Nelson, whose daring and successful exploits at the Nile and Copenhagen pointed him out as peculiarly fitted for an enterprise of this description.[b] Under the orders of the admiralty, Nelson prepared to bombard the harbour of Boulogne.

Admiral La Touche-Tréville was informed of this project. He came out of port, where his crowded ships would have run great risks, and formed outside the moles so as to bear broadside on to the piers a long line of ships, composed of six brigs, two schooners, twenty armed sloops, and a huge number of flat-bottomed boats. On the 4th of August, Nelson came himself at daybreak to anchor his bombketches before the French line. He hoped that, to avoid this attack, the flotilla would take refuge in the harbour of Boulogne, and he promised himself to direct his shells the next night on the mass of shipping thus enclosed within narrow limits. Towards nine in the morning the bombardment began. He could not shake the defensive line, and did nothing, except smash a brig and a flat-bottomed boat. Not a man on board the flotilla was harmed, and the French batteries from land and sea answered the English bombardment by a lively fire. The bursting of a shell wounded an artillery captain and two sailors. This first attempt, then, was an utter failure. But Nelson prepared another, more serious, and of which he hardly doubted the success.

On the 15th of August he anchored at about six thousand yards from the French fleet, still broadside on before the Boulogne harbour. He had with him sloops and pinnaces of every size, by the aid of which he hoped to carry off or burn the French men-of-war. He divided his fleet of fifty-seven into four divisions. In each division two ships' boats were particularly charged to cut the cable and chains of the vessels attacked. These boats, armed with a cord ending in a hook to be thrown on the enemy's vessel, were not to make any attack but simply to try to drag the vessel out. Other vessels undertook to attack and dispose of ships drawn out of line. Each vessel had a well-ground axe, a fuse, and some inflammable composition, so that the ship could either be carried off or burned. The sailors were armed with pikes, swords, and hatchets; the marines had guns and bayonets. At half-past ten that night the ships were fully manned, and at eleven o'clock, when the frigate *Medusa*, commanded by Nelson, showed six lights on her battery, they pushed out into deep water and formed a line in a prearranged order behind the *Medusa*. At a given signal, they set out together from this rallying-point, directing their course by different routes towards the Boulogne sands. The password was "Nelson," the rallying-word "Bronté." The first division, that commanded by Captain Somerville and charged to attack the right wing of the flotilla, found itself on nearing land carried away by the tide in the east of the bay of Boulogne. Captains Parker and Cotgrave did not meet the same obstacle. Parker at the head of a part of his division, boarded the brig *Etna*, which carried the ensign of Captain Pevrieux, but the defences of this brig resisted the English attack. Two hundred infantry, in addition to the sailors, received the English with a well-directed musketry fire, forcing them back to their ships with bayonet thrusts. Parker was seriously wounded in the hip, and would have been taken but for the devotion of one of his midshipmen. Other ships from his division had tried to haul away the brig *Volcan* and were equally unsuccessful. The attack directed by Captain Cotgrave had no better success, and the first two divisions were in full retreat when Captain Somerville reached the port. This brave officer was nothing daunted by the failure of his companions. He threw himself on the right wing and began to imagine he had mastered one of the brigs, when a lively fusillade from the surrounding ships obliged him to retire hastily. He gained the open sea after considerable loss. The fourth division, intended for an attack on the left wing, had met, like that of Somerville, with a contrary tide, and could not get far enough eastwards. It only arrived on the scene of action in time to pick up the wounded and join in the flight of the others. This close combat turned entirely to the advantage of the French. It cost the English 170 men, and produced a profound impression on the opposite shores of the Channel. It was the second repulse Nelson had had. At Boulogne, as at Teneriffe, he had met with unforeseen difficulties and had relied too much on chance and the possible negligence of his enemies.[a]

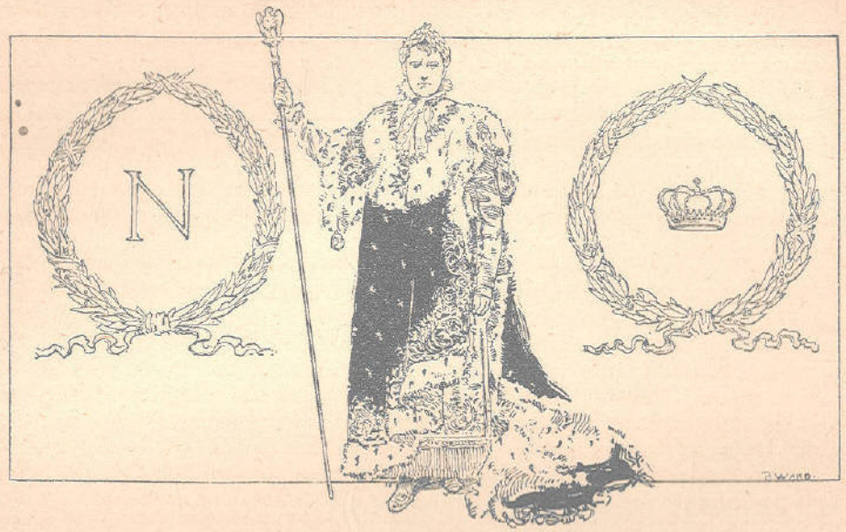
THE PEACE OF AMIENS

Peace could no longer be deferred. Bonaparte was all-powerful on the continent. Holland was quite subjugated. Germany was almost at Napoleon's feet while he was weighing the important question of the secularisations. Prussia and Austria descended to the rôle of beggars, and showed a shameful avidity in the division of church goods. Italy was devoted to him. The pope, ruined, deposed, had no hope but in his clemency. Spain, where in this interval several disturbances had taken place, owing to the frivolity and inconstancy of the Prince of the Peace, fell in with Bonaparte's politics [as is shown fully in the history of Spain], partly because of the false position in which she found herself and partly

from her inability to make the least resistance. Russia was well disposed towards the first consul, who had found the emperor's weak spot — the desire of playing a prominent part — and offered to let him figure as mediator in the distribution of indemnities.

Against such an influence what could England do? So the preliminaries were speedily followed by a satisfactory solution. The document was signed in London on the 10th of October, 1801, and peace was definitely concluded at Amiens, from which town the document received its name, on the 27th of March, 1802.

France consented perforce to evacuate Egypt, for her troops had been taken back by English vessels after the capitulation of Menou, which had taken place in the interval. England restored all her maritime conquests, save Ceylon, taken from the Dutch, and Trinidad, from the Spanish. Imprudence and bad faith on the part of the Prince of the Peace caused this loss to Spain. Great Britain, moreover, respected the integrity of Portugal and the independence of the Ionian Islands. But nothing could make her yield Malta to France, because she regarded that as the key to Egypt. It was finally agreed that it should belong to neither one nor the other, but that pending its restitution to the knights of St. John of Jerusalem (which order was being reorganised) it should be garrisoned by a neutral power who would guarantee its independence. The Peace of Amiens might be called a general peace, for after it all the world rested awhile from the fatigue of a ten years' war. *f*



CHAPTER XVIII

NAPOLEON MAKES HIMSELF EMPEROR

[1801–1804 A.D.]

> Bonaparte, whose name might have taken many years to reach the isolated and illiterate peasantry in many parts of the country, was now brought home to them every day, for he was prayed for at morning and evening service. The few among the more educated classes who had not abjured their faith, not only saw in him the hero of the military glories of the nation, but the protector of the national religion. Far-seeing politicians perceived in this act of the free-thinking first consul, who had taken such a deep interest in the doctrines of Mohammed when he was in Egypt, a step in the direction of higher power.
>
> —WHITE.[b]

THE war of the Revolution in reality was finished and the new wars of which public opinion did not perceive the imminence, necessarily had another character and another aim. Republican France had achieved the highest degree of power that could have been dreamed of by the statesmen of the by-gone monarchy in their wildest aspirations. It surpassed all that had been wished for her by those grand defenders of the Revolution, Danton, Carnot, Merlin de Thionville, who would have preferred an earlier peace. Having attained the limits of ancient Gaul, land of her forefathers, France needed only to fortify herself in her new position by attaching to herself, by kindred ideas, sentiment, and interest, Savoy, Belgium, and the left border of the Rhine, as she had already attached Alsace and Lorraine. They should have surrendered, for her natural and spontaneous development, the little adjacent nations which she ruled at that moment, Holland, Switzerland, the states of northern Italy, while still continuing to protect them against any hostile power. She ought indeed to have assumed once more a pacific attitude towards the great powers, no matter what might be her form of government.

This programme, precise and limited in its magnitude, conceived in view of the permanent interests and historical development of France — could it be adopted and followed by the man to whom France had confided her fate, and who laboured not so much for the destiny of France as for what he believed to be his own individual destiny? The vulgar herd might believe it, but not those men of penetration who had learned to understand him. A Prussian agent, who had observed with shrewdness the march of events in France, wrote to his court: "The one thing in which you must not deceive yourselves is that the last step necessary for Bonaparte to arrive at the throne cannot be made except as the result of new victories. Therefore, please consider the so-called Peace of Amiens in reality a preparation for war." We have followed without interruption the course of events, military and diplomatic, up to the re-establishment of general peace which roused such hopes and such illusions. We must now turn back a little in order to see the development of the new conditions in France, and the policy of the consular régime in the interior.

A REVIEW OF NAPOLEON'S ADMINISTRATION

Napoleon strove with his usual decision and activity to popularise the bustle and stir of work and production which had been brought back under the Directory. He began by the mending of roads so greatly neglected during the grave crises of France. He ordered the completion of the canals, begun towards the end of the former government; next he ordered the cutting of the great canal which traverses all Brittany from Nantes to Brest. He had made, across Valois, which was occupied by French troops, the famous road of the Simplon which descends by Lago Maggiore to Milan. He caused three other routes to be cut from France into Italy. The object of these works was, above all, to facilitate the descent of the French armies into Italy; later, commerce and international relations might find profit in them also.

There was nothing gained by constructing or repairing roads unless their security was guaranteed. The roads during the latter period of the war against Austria were more than ever infested by highwaymen. The *chauffeurs* left in the minds of the people a most doleful memory. The brigands were thus designated, because they burned the feet of those whom they attacked in their homes at night, in order to force them to divulge the hiding-places of their money. These brigands recruited from the "companions of Jesus" in the Midi, like the Chouans in the west, laid waste the half of France. Several hundred of the brigands were shot. The rest dispersed, traffic was resumed.

At the same time Bonaparte made all sorts of advances to the émigrés and priests. A new consular decree of the 20th of October, 1800, suppressed finally from the list of émigrés all persons whose names had been struck off before, no matter by what authority during later times, and all women and children, as well as those priests who had quitted the country in obedience to laws of banishment. The enormous list of émigrés, comprising in the neighbourhood of 145,000 names, was reduced to men who had carried arms against France, who had received rank or honours in foreign countries, or who were in the employ of exiled princes. The recalled émigrés had to promise fidelity to the constitution and to remain under the surveillance of the *haute* police for a year. This was to protect the purchasers of public lands whom the returned émigrés began to harass and menace in every way.

There was no fault to be found with the order itself. The first consul had the right to present it like a measure of justice and humanity; but what was justly disquieting was the fond welcome it gave and the preference it showed towards men of the Old Régime, courtiers or refractory priests. He caused significant phrases to circulate regarding it. "It is only men of this class," said he, in speaking of men of the former court, "who know how to serve." Another day he cried out in open state council: "With my prefects, my gendarmes, and my priests I can do whatever I like!" It was known that he had begun negotiations in view of an arrangement with the pope. He gradually substituted in his official manifestos for the words "country" and "liberty" those of "fidelity" and "glory" and "honour." The tendencies manifested by Bonaparte towards the monarchy deceived the royalists. They dreamed that they would be brought back to work for others rather than for him, and to play in France the rôle of that General Monk, who in England, after the death of Cromwell, had re-established the monarchy of the Stuarts.

The pretender, "Louis XVIII," who was at that time living in retirement in Russia, and who was nevertheless a reflective spirit and coldly sceptical, made the mistake of writing to the first consul two letters, inviting him "to give back her king to France, and to make his conditions as to the places he desired for himself and his friends." Bonaparte answered him with dignity and returned him offer for offer. "You ought not," he wrote, "to wish to return to France. You would have to walk over five hundred thousand corpses. Sacrifice your interests to the repose of France. History will give you the credit. I am not insensible to the misfortunes of your family; I should contribute with pleasure to the agreeableness and tranquillity of your retreat." (September 7th, 1800.) Bonaparte continued seeking to gain the royalists and watching the Jacobins with defiance and aversion.

The disastrous episode of the infernal machine, which had fully manifested the arbitrary character of the consulate, had taken place during the second legislative session of the constitution of the year VIII. At the opening of that session, the 1st Frimaire (December 10th), the government had protested its benevolent and impartial dispositions towards all. It was now seen what that meant. Two bills had been presented — one which diminished the importance and the number of justices of the peace, to the advantage of the police and the detriment of individual liberty; the other which instituted special courts, partly civil, partly military, which the government could substitute in place of the ordinary justice, wherever it might consider it necessary. The military commissions against the brigands had been justifiable, but it was not meant to change what might be called an accident of war into an institution. Benjamin Constant, Daunou, Chénier, the ex-Girondist Isnard, who had returned to his first principles of liberty, after having strongly fought against the reaction, and Ginguené, one of the most distinguished writers of the time, all fought against the two laws most energetically. They passed at the tribunate by only a small majority.

Bonaparte was furious when the discussion held at the tribunate was reported to him; and he burst out into insults to those "metaphysicians," those "philosophers" who were only fit to throw into the sea. He considered all criticism an outrage. Opposition was encountered in financial affairs also. He had made arrangements to evade all control on this subject. Instead of presenting a budget comprising the receipts and expenses, "he proposed," says Lanfrey, "to prorogue for the year X the contributions of the year IX,

and presented a budget in which the receipts alone figured. Thanks to this system the costs of this session were not submitted for the examination of the legislative body until the following session, in order that, all the funds having been consumed, criticism should become useless." His aim was not to hide such disorders, since he had on the contrary re-established order in the finances, but he intended as always to be the absolute master. After lively debates the financial law was rejected by the tribunate but adopted by the legislative body.

Until now the deficit in the budget had been made up by withdrawal from the national funds ; in order to retain what yet remained this resource was replaced by giving bonds to certain creditors of the state. This issue of bonds had exceeded fifty millions since the Peace of Lunéville. The floating debt which still remained, since a third only of the public debt had been funded, was finally regulated under conditions more or less arbitrary as liquidations of this sort always are. The national debt of France therefore was estimated at fifty-seven millions in *rentes perpétuelles* and sixty-nine millions in annuities and pensions, which would be reduced by annual liquidation. The total budget amounted to approximately six hundred millions. These figures would at the present time represent more than double these sums. The revenue of England was from one billion to eleven hundred millions, but burdened with nearly five hundred millions of annual debt, while France always had one resource which England had not—the power of re-establishing the indirect taxes, abolished since 1789. Only the tolls had been re-established. The financial situation of France was therefore satisfactory.

The first consul established, for the reduction of the debt, a sinking fund, bonded on the national property. From the national properties still remaining, valued at four hundred millions, an endowment was assigned for the benefit of public instruction and the "Invalides." It was a wise measure, but it remains to be seen how public instruction was understood. It is very evident that Bonaparte did not act in this as the national convention had expected him to in its creations of the year III. He was at that moment absorbed in destroying the crowning work of that glorious year : the separation of church and state. He had abolished the elective institutions in the state, in the province, in the community, and in the judiciary as well as in the political and administrative orders. He now applied himself vigorously to the study of the consequences of the Revolution on matters of religion. The result was, as we have seen, the concordat of 1802.

THE CIVIL CODE

Pending the negotiations of the concordat, the first consul had had another bill prepared, one of the greatest importance, and which was as necessary as the concordat was useless and dangerous : this was the "civil code." A commission composed of the jurists Portalis, Tronchet, Bigot de Préameneu, and Maleville, having been formed in July, 1800, to prepare the bill, it was then conveyed to the tribunals in order to get their opinions, and afterwards presented to the state council. This work was almost achieved in 1793 by the convention. If this body had not put the finishing touch to it and had not promulgated it, it was because the form in which it was put by the jurists charged with its composition and editing was not sufficiently philosophical. It was not under the government of Bonaparte that one could hope to see the fulfilment of the intentions of the convention in that regard.

The code in regard to general ideas could not but lose by being altered under the direction of the first consul. Civil laws are not like political laws. The men who gave to the code its definite form were too much imbued with the modern spirit to return to the traditions prior to '89 and Bonaparte himself had no such idea. What he wished, above all, was that the codification of the new civil institutions of France should appear as his own personal work and that the immense labours of the revolutionary assembly might be cast into the shade. The same men who had prepared the composition of the code under the constituent assembly, like Tronchet, or had it executed under the convention, like Cambacérès, Treilhard, Merlin de Douai, Berlier, Thibaudeau, altered it under the consulate and gave the credit of it to the first consul.

Bonaparte moreover posed with great artfulness before France and all Europe in order to be considered a great legislator. To sustain successfully the rôle he was playing required all those extraordinary faculties with which he was endowed. He assimilated with an incredible facility, by hasty interviews with specialists, elements of knowledge most foreign to him, and discoursed with much force, brilliancy, and originality upon subjects of which he had not known a word the day before. It is thus he debated on ecclesiastical themes with theologians and the canonists of the pope, and now he debated before the state council on judiciary matters. He had an amazing talent for condensing long discussions and cutting them short with a single word for or against.

This was not always to the advantage of the soundest ideas and it was rarely to the advancement of progressive ideas that he employed these marvellous faculties. Thus, although affecting constantly the desire to reconstruct the society overthrown by the Revolution, the desire to strengthen the ties of families, and above all to facilitate the formation of associations, in reality he wanted only isolated individuals : they are easier to govern. As to divorce, which the Revolution had made so easy as to be almost a menace to public morals, the civil code imposed serious restrictions and returned again to the true principles according to which divorce should be only the exception — a necessary evil, to prevent still greater evils ; but this reform demanded by the interests of society was in a manner forced upon Bonaparte by the jurists by whom he was surrounded. He surpassed on this point the revolutionary exaggeration, and would have wished that the divorce might be decreed on the demand of only one of the spouses, on the plea of "facts not proven." This would have meant illimitable freedom of divorce. It required much persuasion to induce him to renounce this idea. This was because he was laying plans for himself, having abandoned all hope of having children by Josephine and hoping thus to provide himself with an heir.

He wished at the same time to relax family ties and subjugate women. Women were for him entirely inferior beings, and he professed in regard to them views which seemed to be at times the outlived ideas of the most retrograde peoples, of those Mussulmans whom he preferred to Christians ; views which indicated the absence of moral principle which characterised him and the greater part of his family. He resembled the cæsars in this respect as well as in his political ideas. His enormous labours were always incompatible with his unmethodical habits and above all he disliked scandal and affected to react by the imposing etiquette of his family against the brazen license of the time of Barras.

The imperfections of the code, be they in regard to the rights of women and the inconceivable preference to the most distant collateral relatives of the sur-

viving heirs to an estate, be they in regard to other important matters, such as the unjust inequality between employers and employés in their industrial relations (civil code and penal code), are principally if not exclusively imputable to Bonaparte. The enormous blank which the code presents relative to associations of all kinds may perhaps not entirely be attributed to Bonaparte, but also to the fact that the prodigious development of industrial and commercial relations could not be foreseen. The most eminent members of the state council were learned jurists but not economists. In regard to this point they too often looked back to the Roman law and did not see whither modern progress was tending. For the same reason they occupied themselves almost exclusively with landed property and had not the slightest premonition of the immense future of personal property.

In spite of these shortcomings and defects, the civil code of France is, taken on the whole, none the less the realisation of the views of the eighteenth century and the principles of '89. New France will revise and correct, but will never replace it. As the combined work of 1791, of 1793 and 1801, it is a monument to the French Revolution which the reaction from the 18th Brumaire was obliged to build and consecrate. Much superior to the confused mass of traditions and conditions and contradictory customs which formed the legislation of other European nations, it was adopted with a reasonable and steadfast fidelity by the peoples then reunited to France and since separated from her; and it has become a model which other nations have striven to copy. The next presentation of the concordat of the civil code to the body of state which was to discuss and vote upon them gave great importance to the legislative session of the year X. It opened on the 1st Frimaire (November 22nd, 1801).

GROWING AUTOCRACY OF NAPOLEON

The discontent caused by the concordat spoiled the satisfaction produced by the state of general peace. The treaties of peace and then the first three sections of the civil code were presented to the legislative body. Bonaparte, in view of the spirit which was being manifested, adjourned the presentation of the concordat. One article in the treaty with Russia caused the liveliest discussions in the tribunate. It was said in that article that the two contracting parties (France and Russia) promised mutually not to allow any one of their subjects to foment trouble on the territory of the other party. The word "subjects" roused indignation: "Our armies," cried Chénier, "have fought for ten years, that we might become 'citizens'; and we have become 'subjects.' Thus the vow of double alliance is kept." There were at this time three senatorial vacancies to fill; the tribunate, the legislative body, and the first consul, according to the constitution, could each present a candidate, and the senate could choose. The candidate of the legislative body for the first place was Grégoire. The senate by a large majority elected Grégoire, preferring him to the candidate of the first consul. Bonaparte was hurt by that rebuff, but soon received a more serious one.

Daunou was proposed simultaneously by the tribunate and the legislative body for the second place vacant in the senate. It was an act of opposition much more marked than the choice of Grégoire. Daunou, who could not console himself for having taking part in the 18th Brumaire, had broken with Bonaparte on the occasion of the law which established the tribunals of exceptional (special) law and had declared that he would take no part in legislative work while this tyranny continued.

Bonaparte was exasperated. The following day he had a violent scene with the senators who presented themselves for an audience. He intimated to them that he should consider it a personal insult if the senate nominated Daunou and that he never forgot an injury. The senate weakened most deplorably and shamefully. It feigned to have no knowledge of the nomination of Daunou by the legislative body, and to have received no notification except of the nomination of General Lamartillière — Napoleon's candidate.

Bonaparte had thought for a moment of a *coup d'état*, a new 18th Brumaire against his own constitution. Cambacérès dissuaded him from this, and suggested that he evade the constitution in lieu of breaking it. The pusillanimity of the senate had made the thing easy. Tronchet, who was at this time president of the senate, fearing the violent actions of which he foresaw Bonaparte would be capable was persuaded to second Cambacérès. The constitution had said that the tribunate and the legislative body should be renewed by a fifth from the year X. It was quite natural that this renewal should be made by drawing lots; but the constitution did not say so expressly. It was decided there should be no drawing of lots and that the senate should designate the retiring members, that is to say, that it excluded those displeasing to the first consul.

The senate consented to this strange interpretation of the constitution. It eliminated sixty members of the legislative body and twenty of the tribunate: Daunou, Benjamin Constant, Chénier, Ganilh the economist, the eminent writer Ginguené, the ex-Girondin Isnard, and with these other former conventionists or former patriotic priests opposed to the concordat; in a word, all those who elected Bonaparte (end of January, 1802). Among those replacing the excluded members, who were mainly military men or functionaries, was one republican, Carnot, who long ago had resigned from the ministry of war. Bonaparte expected henceforth not to hear another dissenting voice. April 5th, 1802, he had the concordat presented to the tribunate and the legislative body.

An historian favourable to Napoleon, Bignon[e] says very truly that the first consul intended to make of a clergy a sort of "sacred police." Bonaparte had completed the concordat, under the title of *articles organiques*, by a regulation which had been thoroughly studied and worked out by the state council and which was the application and development of the article by which the pope granted to the new government of France all the rights which it had had under the Old Régime. These *articles organiques* were invented to serve a double purpose: first, to protect the state against all interference by the court of Rome in home affairs; second, to make the bishops subject to the government, and the ordinary priests to the bishops. The bishops were not allowed to call themselves by any title except "Citizen" or "Monsieur."

The curés had to be chosen by the bishops of the diocese, but with the sanction of the first consul, and the bishop could not revoke the nominations arbitrarily; but there should be only one curé in a "canton," and as for vicars and officiating priests, their nomination was, and is still, entirely at the discretion of the bishop. The protection given formerly to the lower clergy by the ecclesiastical disciplinary board had been taken away. The lower clergy found and still find themselves in a worse position than before '89. The *articles organiques* are for them a law of servitude.

The concordat was followed by the recall of the émigrés. The resolution was presented to, and voted upon by the senate, the 6th Floréal (April 26th).

The irrevocability of the sale of national properties was again demonstrated. The amnesty accorded to the émigrés excluded the heads of army corps and some others whose cases were particularly grave. Such of the properties of the émigrés as had not been sold were restored to them, excepting woodlands. Bonaparte intended to gradually give back the forests in order to propitiate the aristocracy. The bill concerning taxes showed at this time neither the state of the receipts nor that of the expenses. The vote on duties was henceforth nothing more than a mere formality. Bonaparte regulated the budgets as he wished without any control.

THE LEGION OF HONOUR AND EDUCATIONAL PLANS

Two important bills were presented to the tribune and the legislative body — the Legion of Honour, and public instruction. The convention decreed that weapons of honour should be given to the defenders of the country for distinguished action. The first consul had arranged and regulated their distribution. This did not suffice for him. He wanted a vast system of rewards, calculated to excite the vanity, to remunerate the services, and place in the ruling hand a new and most powerful means of influence over civil as well as military society. He conceived therefore the creation of a Legion of Honour embracing every species of service and claims to public distinction.

He sought at the same time a counterweight to that which he made for the clergy and the émigrés. He exacted from the *légionnaires* an oath to defend the republic and its territory, equality, and the inviolability of the national property. This bill to reconstitute a great order of chivalry was fought, meanwhile even in the state council, as hindering that equality which the légionnaires were expected to defend, and as the re-establishment of an aristocracy.

In the tribunate the bill passed with only 56 votes against 38; in the legislative body with 166 against 110, this after the weeding out by which it had been calculated to annihilate all opposition. This proves how strong the Revolution still was, even in those departments of state so yielding and enervated. The institution of the Legion of Honour was specious, and although it encountered a strong opposition at its origin it has entered into the life of a people which, in spite of its passion for equality, loves distinctions, providing they are not hereditary. It will no doubt be considerably reformed and modified; it would be difficult to abolish it.

As to the bill on public instruction, it was deplorable. It did absolutely nothing for primary instruction. The state did not interfere. The community was to furnish the premises, wherever the students could pay the instructor. It was the complete abandonment of the plan of the great French assemblies. Concerning instruction in the second grade, the most enlightened of the counsellors of state wished that the "central schools" founded by the convention might be retained after improving them. About a third were successful. The rest weakened. It was necessary to encourage and reorganise them.

But Bonaparte would not allow this. He intended to substitute barracks where the young men should be brought up for this service. He upset the whole great plan of studies which the convention had adopted, started only thirty-two lyceums in place of the one hundred central schools, made them return to the routine of the old system of ecclesiastical colleges and begin the study of Latin and Greek at an age when the child is nearly always incapable of taking an interest in these beautiful learned languages, and

understands nothing of grammatical and literary instruction. He suppressed the study of the living languages, so necessary to make France acquainted with the peoples with which she is in constant intercourse. He weakened instruction in diminishing the part assigned to the sciences, and curtailed it in doing away with the moral sciences, that is to say, history and philosophy, incompatible with despotism.

He completed his system of secondary instruction by the establishment of six thousand scholarships which would be a means of influence like the Legion of Honour. The scholarships were not to be gained by the competition of the students but distributed by the government, partly to the children of persons who had rendered military or civil service, partly to the students of the special boarding schools, which could not exist without the authorisation of the government, and sent their pupils to take the courses in the lyceums. As to the education of girls, that was entirely another question. This was perhaps the worst of all the institutions of the consulate. The only useful thing which was then done for instruction was the creation of six law schools, a necessary consequence of the codification which was to be made, and the increase of the schools of medicine from three to six. In addition to the Polytechnic School founded by the convention, the first consul established a military academy, formerly at Fontainebleau (later at St. Cyr).

While working thus to develop the study of the sciences of war, Bonaparte continued the campaign he had undertaken against philosophy, and completed the suppression of instruction in history and philosophy in the academies by abolishing the moral and political sciences in the Institute. That class in the Institute was not restored again until after the Revolution of 1830.[k]

NAPOLEON MADE CONSUL FOR LIFE

The ambitious and intriguing who surrounded Bonaparte asked for nothing better than a continuance in his hands of a power from which they derived the places and honours with which they were loaded. Some even wished for the re-establishment of hereditary monarchy in favour of Bonaparte. That was in reality the first consul's inward prayer. But sharp, cunning, and dissembling as he was, he disclosed this earnest desire to no one, wishing to be understood at half a word. Cambacérès was deceived in this. He thought this insatiable ambition would be satisfied with the consulate for life. It was, moreover, in his opinion quite sufficient remuneration for the services rendered to the country by the first consul. Consequently he used all his influence in the senate for the carrying out of his plan.

Already for some months devoted emissaries frequented the public places declaring that the time had come for the country to give some token of recognition to the author of all the blessings it enjoyed. An occasion must now be found to extract from the state bodies that brilliant token. The obvious opportunity was the presentation to the legislative body and the tribunate of the Treaty of Amiens, due for the most part to the victories and policy of Bonaparte, a presentation which had been purposely delayed. After the reading to the tribunate of the articles of this treaty on the 6th of May, Chabot, an old member of the convention, and president of the assembly, proposed to announce the offering made to the first consul in token of national gratitude. This having been voted, a deputation from the tribunate proceeded to the Tuileries to apprise General Bonaparte of it. With affected

modesty he replied to the tribune Siméon, the mouthpiece of the deputation, that he aspired to no reward other than the love of the citizens, and that death would have no terrors for him if he could with his last glances see the welfare of the republic assured.

The senate had been immediately taken with the tribunate's offering. Some of the senators who approached the consul endeavoured to get an expression of his secret wishes; but dissembling continually, he said that whatever was done would be well done and gratefully received.

The majority in the senate, under the impression that Cambacérès in proposing a consulate for life was asking the greater to obtain the less, thought that ample satisfaction would be given to the tribunate in issuing on the 18th Floréal (May 8th) a *senatus consultum* by which Citizen Napoleon Bonaparte was re-elected consul for ten years, which would commence concurrently with the expiration of his first term of office.

The disillusionment of the first consul was profound. In the first moment of irritation he was for brutally refusing the senate's offer. But wise Cambacérès was there and prevailed on him to be calm. He suggested a shift by which to escape from the delicate situation which the senatorial deliberations had created. That shift was the resort to a plebiscite. Bonaparte after all wrote to the senate his thanks for this exceptional proof of its esteem. He added that, from private motives, the term of his political existence seemed to be decided at the moment when the peace of the world was proclaimed. "But," he said in conclusion, "the glory and welfare of the citizen must be unmentioned when the state interest and the protection of the people are concerned. In your estimation, I owe the people another sacrifice; I will make it if the people's wish commands what your vote authorises." Tartuffe's art never went beyond this. Then a comedy was begun, worthy of the pen of Beaumarchais. The council of state was ordered to work without delay upon some scheme for obtaining a plebiscite, and from the 21st Floréal the *Moniteur Officiel* published a consular decree by which the people of France were called upon to answer the question, "Shall Napoleon Bonaparte be consul for life?" At the same time there appeared a pamphlet, an appropriate addition to that of M. de Fontanes, in which the anonymous author claimed on behalf of Bonaparte the time necessary to assure the welfare of France, that is to say, the century which began with him. The consular decree encountered no opposition. The senate was dumb in spite of the ignominious part it was compelled under the circumstances to play. The legislative body and the tribunate hastened to convey their adherence to the Tuileries.

Registries were immediately opened in all the town halls to take the affirmative or negative votes of the citizens. At the same time as he was engaged in a scrutiny of the plebiscite, the first consul occupied himself with a modification of the constitution, so that it should more nearly approach the monarchical system, since, though lacking heredity, he was about to become a literal sovereign. A few made it their business to suggest the English constitution as a model. Camille Jordan published a brochure on this subject which attracted a great deal of attention. Possibly a recent visit from James Fox, to whom the first consul had given the best reception possible, and the presence in Paris of M. de Calonne, who had been equally well received at the Tuileries, inclined Bonaparte towards a constitutional form of government. It was difficult to recognise the man of Brumaire. The hard lesson of adversity was necessary to teach him that it does not do for one head to transact alone all the business of the nation.

The modifications introduced into the consular constitution above all things augmented the already great personal influence of the chief of the state. Thus the legislative body and the tribunate, whose last votes on the Legion of Honour had already laid them open to suspicion, saw themselves robbed of the right of making treaties. This prerogative was attributed to a privy council which, to the detriment even of the council of state, found itself intrusted in the same way with the wording of the *senatus consultum* organs. The privy council and the first consul were one and the same thing. The legislative authority of the tribunate was considerably diminished by the reduction of its members to fifty through repeated abolitions of seats. The council of state retaliated by increasing its strength by one-third. But the body which gained most in these constitutional modifications was the senate. Its present constitutional powers were largely increased. In addition it had the exorbitant right of suspending the empanelling and administration by jury in certain departments, of dissolving the legislative body and the tribunate, and of quashing judgments thought subversive to the safety of the state. Obviously in the first consul's opinion the state could only, under these diverse circumstances, be looked upon as an accommodating instrument to his personal wishes. Moreover, to be more sure of the members of this body Bonaparte assigned to himself the right to nominate specifically forty senators, and this, combined with the creation of fourteen new seats, brought the number of its members up to one hundred and twenty.

On the 13th Thermidor (August 3rd) the members of the senate, discredited in advance, betook themselves to the Tuileries, under the leadership of the old director Barthélemy, who acted as their president. There, in the presence of the representatives of all the foreign courts, President Barthélemy, in a harangue in which flattery was pushed to the furthest limit, enumerated Bonaparte's claims to the nation's gratitude, and predicted for him in the future an unlimited prosperity. He did not predict his reverses or disasters, matters upon which flatterers never inform themselves. After which discourse he read the *senatus consultum* by which Napoleon was proclaimed first consul for life. Bonaparte replied with that hypocritical unselfishness familiar to him, and which is found elsewhere amongst all ambitious of power. "A citizen's life belongs to his country. The French people wish the whole of mine to be consecrated to them. I have bowed to their wishes."

Not a word about the republic. He promised only the prosperity and freedom of France. "God have mercy on us!" exclaims Ernest Hamel[a] "they will henceforth be at the mercy of capricious fortune and the uncertainty of the future." On the next day the constitutional projects of the *senatus consultum* were agreed to in the council of state, after a discussion in which it pleased the first consul to take a lively part, and the same day it was approved by the senate. After the 17th Thermidor, this scheme was proclaimed in the accustomed way as an embodied law of the state.[a]

NAPOLEON AND THE SISTER REPUBLICS

The progress of Bonaparte's influence over neighbouring states was as great as his rise at home. The Cisalpine Republic had been remodelled to suit his views; and in January its legislature elected him president. The Batavian, the Ligurian republics, were obliged to submit to similar modifications. Piedmont was formally annexed to France, and divided into departments. Thus the stipulations of the Treaty of Lunéville, guaranteeing

independence to the republics of Italy and Holland, became totally void. England began to show alarm and distrust; for both of which there was ample reason, although scarcely more than existed at the epoch of the treaty. When she remonstrated, Bonaparte replied, "You must have seen or foreseen all this. The Cisalpine chose me its president in January, two months before the signature at Amiens. And why should ye English complain of the infraction of the Treaty of Lunéville, when Austria, with whom it was concluded, holds her peace?"

Miserable, indeed, is the special pleading on both sides to throw, each upon its adversary, the blame of the war. Both were right, and both were wrong. England, in her native might and pride, could never sit still and look on whilst France assumed to herself such predominant power in Europe. Nor could France, or its ruler, refrain from wielding that influence which conquest had given her. But France was wrong in affecting a moderation which she had no idea of observing; and England equally absurd to affect to give a moment's credit to it — above all, to stipulate actual concession to it. At Amiens, and before the treaty, the British ministry seemed to be either willing dupes or blind ones. Their object in peace, the same as that of Bonaparte, to display to Europe and their own people, each how ready they were to make peace, and thus to throw the blame of the inevitable and speedy rupture upon its foe. In this aim we do think the English negotiators played the less clever game. And the ministry, though rationally justified in their mistrusts, in their withholding Malta and the Cape, on the grounds that France had increased its territories and encroachments in Europe, were still left without any precise plea, and were obliged to support their cause with vague recrimination. The French kept the letter of the treaty; the English broke it. And yet the former were the true aggressors and encroachers. Such were the blunders of British diplomacy.

No sooner did Bonaparte announce his determination of interfering with the Helvetian republics, than the English ministry sent an agent thither with promises of support to the independent party, hesitated to surrender Malta, and sent counter orders that the Cape of Good Hope was not to be delivered up to the Batavian Republic. In the meantime other than these great interests of territory sowed divisions betwixt the first consul and Great Britain.

At all times sensitive to public opinion, so sensitive that even an imprudent reflection was enough to alienate him from a tried friend, a witticism sufficient to bring down an order of exile, he was particularly susceptible at the present moment, when employed in rearing the fabric of his power, to which his character was his only title. The freedom of the English press, its unsparing attacks upon him, re-echoed by the papers of the French royalists in England, was a kind of war more dangerous and galling to him than any other. Before it, indeed, no tyrant can stand. Bonaparte felt as much alarm from it as did England originally from the levelling principles of the Revolution. He made vain demands that this should be checked, and was modest enough to propose that the press of England should be gagged, as well as that of France, in order to give security to his personal ambition. Nevertheless, on this point the ministry gratified him, as far as might be done in a constitutional way, sending one of these libels before a jury. As might be expected, this made matters ten times worse, sending Pelletier's libel to fame through the trump of Mackintosh's eloquence. Another demand, that the Bourbons and their partisans should be expelled from England, met with a firm and generous denial.

With the English press Bonaparte condescended to enter into a personal quarrel: just as he himself had charged the cannon against Toulon, so now he employed his time in penning articles for the *Moniteur*, his official paper, full of acrimony and insult. The unfortunate results of a sovereign so demeaning himself are evident. Bonaparte could never distinguish the difference betwixt a nation's government and its press; so that, in answering squibs fired off by an individual editor, the first consul charged the great gun of state, and risked, or at any rate precipitated, a war betwixt millions of men, in endeavouring to apply a salve upon his own miserable vanity. Then appeared the imprudent vaunting report of Sebastiani, who had been charged with a mission in the Levant; its information, that six thousand French soldiers could reconquer Egypt; and the challenge, that "England alone dare not make war with France."

BONAPARTE'S QUARREL WITH ENGLAND (1803 A.D.)

These paper paragraphs certainly could not be serious grounds of war; although the English government, by its imbecile arrangement and acceptation of the Treaty of Amiens, was obliged to recur to such pretexts, to collect and group them — thus making up by a mass of petty grievances for the want of one large and specific plea. The first consul now demanded why Malta had not been evacuated according to stipulation. The English replied by a claim to keep Malta on the ground that Bonaparte had increased his European territory, and that he threatened Egypt. The last was idle: the first objection "was not in the bond." Bonaparte, whose very throne was then being erected on the basis of national glory, could not yield Malta. To demand it of him was, in fact, to declare war. And the minister asserted with only becoming spirit, "England shall have the Treaty of Amiens, and nothing more than the Treaty of Amiens." War was inevitable, as indeed it had been from the first. England could not submit, at the risk of her existence. In this, at least, her ministry and Pitt were right, however imbecile and blundering the former had proved in these negotiations, which placed the letter of treaties against Britain, whilst their spirit, as well as their sense of security and justice, told loudly in her favour.

On these terms of mutual mistrust both countries thought fit to make preparations for war. Bonaparte assembled troops in the forts of Holland and North France, and despatched envoys to Prussia and to Austria. England was no less active. Bonaparte was unwilling to recommence war, at least so soon, inevitable as he saw it. But England was peremptory. She was tricked and annoyed in a thousand ways. And a warlike message from the king to his parliament in March, 1803, was the preluding blast to war. Bonaparte answered by one of his diplomatic notes. He was now betwixt two unpleasant feelings. It was important for him to throw the blame of the breach upon England, in order to content his people and conciliate the yet existing powers of Europe; and nevertheless his pride was galled to find England assume the lofty, intractable, defiant language, so indicative of superiority and strength. His quick resentment prompted him to break through the laws of courtly decorum, and to vent his spleen upon the representative of Great Britain.

During a public levee he abruptly addressed the British ambassador Lord Whitworth, "You are decided on war, it seems — you wish it. After fifteen years' combat, we must yet recommence for fifteen years to come. You force me to it." He then turned to the ambassadors of Spain and Russia: "The

English will have war. They are the first to draw the sword: I will be the last to put it in the scabbard. They do not respect treaties, and we must henceforth cover them with a black crape. You may destroy France, but you shall not intimidate her." "We do not wish to do either one or the other," replied Lord Whitworth calmly. "Respect treaties. Woe to those who break through them: they shall be responsible to Europe for the consequences." This burst of anger is said by some to have been calculated. Why might it not be natural and deep-felt? Previous to the Treaty of Amiens, Bonaparte had borne England a national hate; since then it had grown into a personal one — an antipathy founded on all causes of enmity, great and little, on pride and piqûe, as well as upon interest and patriotism.

Lord Whitworth was now ordered by his government to demand the occupation of Malta during ten years by British troops, whilst the French were to evacuate Holland. This was called an ultimatum, and but a week's interval allowed for reply. Yet even here the French assumed not that peremptory tone. Talleyrand was averse to war; that able statesman is said to have foreseen the pernicious consequences even of fresh victories. But the English minister, conscious that he resisted usurpation, and an indefinite system of encroachment, held firm, gave very wretched and shuffling reasons for a mistrust well founded in itself, and covered the blunders of his diplomacy with sullen pride and defiance. Orders had been already issued for seizing the ships of France and of her subject states — a measure much in the spirit of that usurpation which one might have censured without imitating; and the French consul retaliated by retaining all the British subjects whom curiosity or business had brought at that unlucky moment to French shores. Thus recommenced betwixt the nations a quarrel unrivalled for the inveteracy of its spirit and the variety of its fortunes. "The rupture was to the first consul," says Bignon,[c] "the decisive point of his destiny. Henceforth he saw England rise before him like a cape of storms, which he was forever forbidden to pass."

The only military enterprise set on foot during the year's peace, if we except the occupation of Switzerland, was the expedition to Santo Domingo. The principles of the Revolution, passed into decrees by the national assemblies, had been productive of the most fearful mischief in Santo Domingo, where Robespierre's energetic wish, of "Let the colonies perish rather than one principle be disturbed," received ample fulfilment. Whites and mulattoes had commenced a civil war, and the negroes had also asserted their rights. The latter, being most numerous, gained the ascendency, headed by a chief of inflexible character, and of such high talents, both for warring and ruling, as to merit the name of the black Bonaparte.

Toussaint Louverture, such was his name, had established his rule in Santo Domingo. It was as beneficent and vigorous as that of the first consul in Europe; but the latter was determined to recover the island; and a fine army, composed of the conquerors of Hohenlinden, were sent out to subdue it under General Leclerc, who had married Pauline, Bonaparte's sister. The expedition reached its destiny. The blacks, after burning their capital, and making a stubborn resistance, were subdued, and the chiefs compelled to submit. Most of them accepted command under the French, except Toussaint, who scorned the offer, and merely demanded to return to his farm. Here, however, he was closely watched; and in the effervescence of a population ill subdued, suspicions, true or false, could not fail to attach to the old leader. Toussaint Louverture was seized, sent on board a ship, and conveyed to France, where he lingered many years at the château of Joux, in

the Jura. This treachery, if it was such, proved bootless. The yellow fever decimated the French, and soon reduced this flourishing army to a few thousand men. Leclerc himself fell a victim; and the breaking out of the war decided the ultimate loss, to France, of this her most important colony. [A fuller account of these affairs will be found in a later volume under the history of Santo Domingo.]

The first steps of Bonaparte, on the renewal of the war with England, was to order his armies to march north and south; that of Holland to occupy Hanover; that of Lombardy to invade Naples and garrison Tarentum. He could combat his maritime foe only by establishing his power in seaports, and in rendering every shore hostile to her, who rendered every wave hostile to him. To plant himself, therefore, like a huge colossus bestriding Europe, one foot in the Mediterranean, the other in the Baltic, was the attitude of menace assumed by the first consul against England. Towards the latter end of May, 1803, General Mortier marched with an army from Holland against Hanover. The troops of the electorate were not capable of making a serious resistance. They retreated before the foe, at length capitulated, and were broken, Mortier taking peaceable possession of the country.

These conquests of the French necessarily excited disquiet and mistrust on the part of the great powers of the north. Russia, which had taken the Sicilian court under its protection, was offended by the reoccupation of the kingdom of Naples, and still more seriously displeased to see the French flag waving upon the fortresses of the Baltic. That power had sought in vain to cover Hanover by a neutrality which was to extend to the north of Germany. Her remonstrances were not listened to. Prussia, as may be well supposed, had cause to be still more alarmed by the presence of such a formidable neighbour. The French, not contented with Hanover, already menaced to occupy Hamburg and Bremen. The necessity of opposing England was still the pretext. But the possession of Hamburg, commanding the mouth of the Elbe, would enable the French to give law to the north of Germany. Not only was Prussia herself weakened by this, but her only title to respect and influence being founded upon her claims to protect the liberties and independence of surrounding states, she was here stricken painfully by a blow vainly aimed at England. Thus, by delivering up Hanover without a blow, the English ministry, if they acted on calculation, fulfilled all the ends of wise policy, avenged themselves on Prussia for its selfish and pusillanimous neutrality, and placed the courts of Berlin and St. Petersburg in the necessity of either humbling their sovereign dignity before Bonaparte, or of flinging themselves into the alliance of Great Britain.

To counteract this, the scheme of Bonaparte was, by menace or bribe, to compel Russia to join cordially with him in a kind of submissive alliance. "The germ," says Bignon,[c] French ambassador to Prussia, and well acquainted with the projects of his master — "the germ of what was subsequently called the continental system existed in the mind of the first consul, and this system reposed upon the support of Prussia. One of the objects of the usurpation of Hanover was to make that court feel the inconveniences of a state of indecision towards France, and the advantages of a close alliance with her. To render Prussia powerful, in order that, by its union with France, it might awe the continent to quiet, was the aim of Bonaparte. If it be asked why, towards the close of his reign, Napoleon showed himself merciless towards Prussia, the reason is that Prussia was the power which wished him most ill, in forcing him to combat and destroy her, instead of

extending and strengthening her monarchy, in order that she and France united might keep Austria and Russia immovable, and at the same time give that development and efficacy to the continental system, which would force England to peace."

Nothing can be more clear than this language of the French diplomatist: Prussia was to be fattened and enriched, provided she acted a part subservient to France. Hanover was the bribe offered to her, and there was considerable hesitation in refusing it. But the influence which decided the monarch of Prussia to reject the insidious and disgraceful proposals of Bonaparte was that of Alexander, emperor of Russia, a sovereign whose high personal feelings of pride and independence raised him already in the east of Europe as the competitor of the tyrant of the west. Alexander visited Berlin: his opinion, his arguments, had weight, and overcame all the representations of Duroc and the other French envoys. The queen and court, at first drawn into admiration of French heroism, were recalled to feelings of national spirit by the voice and example of Alexander; and the king, instead of aiming at rounding his territory at the cost of England and the gift of France, was inspired with the nobler aim of securing the independence of Germany.

GERARD CHRISTOPHE MICHEL DUROC
(1772–1813)

Singular, indeed, it was, that every act of Bonaparte now told in favour of England, or of its ministry, which, had he rested tranquil, could certainly not have continued a war without feasible object or possible success. The occupation of Hanover and the southern peninsula of Italy roused Europe. And now a French army collected along its northern coast, and destined to invade England, had the effect of awakening all the energies of that country, silencing the remonstrance of the partisans of the peace, and rousing the proud spirit of the British to that pitch of hostility against the foe, that war, to the last shilling and the last drop of blood, became the sole and all-pervading thought of the country. A field of battle was denied to Bonaparte: but his activity was turned to military organisation; and he now formed the armies, and prepared the resources, destined to achieve conquests hereafter with such brilliant success. Alexandria was fortified at an enormous expense. The first consul looked upon it as the bulwark of Italy. From Otranto and Tarentum to the Texel every coast and seaport saw fortifications rise around it; and the English fleet, blocking each harbour and menacing every shore, might observe with pride the gigantic attempt of her foe to surround Europe, as it were, with a wall of defence against her. As to the colonies or foreign possessions of France, the remaining ones now

fell; and Louisiana, wrested from the weak hands of Spain by a surreptitious treaty, was now sold for a sum of money to the United States, to preserve the province from England, and as the only mode left of deriving advantage from it.

The army and flotilla collected for the invasion of England was the chief object and topic of the year 1803. The former was swelled by contingents of Dutch, Swiss, and Italians. Soult, Davout, and Ney had each commands. His more ancient and celebrated generals Bonaparte had dispersed: he disliked their familiarity, their old footing of equality with him, and dreaded their interference with his ambitious designs. Thus Moreau was destined to some inferior command; Lannes, after a scene of altercation, in which he had used the most gross language towards Bonaparte, was despatched to Lisbon to cool his zeal and mend his fortune, both of which the gallant and rough soldier fulfilled; Murat was sent to Naples, as Leclerc had been to Santo Domingo, for the same purpose. Spain, reluctant to incur the hostility of England by furnishing open aid to France, proposed a pecuniary subsidy in lieu. This Beurnonville negotiated.

PICHEGRU'S PLOT AND THE DEATH OF THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN (1803 A.D.)

Public attention, however, was now turned from military projects and events to domestic ones, by the discovery of a conspiracy against the first consul. His measures for strengthening and perpetuating his own power, soon convinced the partisans of the house of Bourbon that no hopes were to be entertained of his co-operation, and accordingly their views were elsewhere directed. The consulship for life had been voted. Several distinguished men had protested against the decree, unless accompanied with guarantees of freedom. La Fayette conveyed his protest in a letter; Camille Jordan published his in favour of the liberty of the press; Madame de Staël courageously opened her salon to this enlightened opposition, but a decree of exile banished her from Paris. Some of these friends of liberty then turned their views towards Louis XVIII and entered into a correspondence with him, wherein that prince promised, in case of restoration, to respect the principles of liberty, and to grant a charter similar to that later decreed in 1814. The leanings and opinions, however, of retired and speculative men, were not energetic enough to inspire or conduct a project of conspiracy.

The Bourbons reckoned in their cause more zealous and active partisans, men eager to strike a blow, to force and anticipate events, rather than to wait for their tardy or improbable development. General Pichegru was one of these: he had escaped from his place of transportation to England, where he lived in want of those succours that the French royalists were willing to extend to their partisans. Pichegru now entered into a plot for violently overthrowing the power of Bonaparte, with a knot of men fitting for such an enterprise. Georges Cadoudal, the stubborn Chouan, was another leader.

What the conspirators chiefly wanted was a name, a leader of eminence, to oppose to that of Bonaparte. Moreau was precisely the personage; a great general, a rival of Bonaparte. The very project of enlisting such a man contradicts the idea of assassination, which he certainly would not listen to, and which his countenance might render unnecessary. Moreau, though a valiant soldier, was a weak man:[1] he had allowed himself to be

[1 That Moreau would gladly have seen and gladly have helped an insurrection against Bonaparte is certain." — SEELEY.]

duped in Brumaire; and since his victory of Hohenlinden he had been treated with studied neglect by Bonaparte. The royalist agents, on the watch, took advantage of this disposition, and formed a reconciliation betwixt him and Pichegru; and he thus became at least cognisant of the intended plot. Fouché, who had lost his post as chief of the police, but who still maintained his agents, is said to have been instrumental in thus implicating Moreau, and in maturing a plot, of which he himself holding the clue might take advantage with Bonaparte in showing his superior information, his utility, and zeal.

Pichegru, at length, arrived from England in an English vessel in January, 1804; Georges Cadoudal had preceded by many months. They both saw Moreau, who was disgusted by the ferocity of the latter; and their scheme, whatever it was, seemed not to make any progress towards maturity. Numbers of their accomplices were already in prison; and it seemed as if Pichegru and Cadoudal were allowed to continue at large merely to afford them leisure to win over Moreau still more, and implicate him. But these conspirators, of such discordant opinions, could agree in no plan whatever: they met, separated, hindered the conspiracy, had always excuses for deferring their project, and despaired of fixing upon any. When they were severally arrested — Moreau first, then Pichegru, Cadoudal, and the Polignacs — Pichegru and Cadoudal were both armed, and the latter made resistance.

ANNE JEAN MARIE RENÉ SAVARY
(1774–1833)

In the interval between their arrest and trial occurred the blackest deed that history imputes to Napoleon, of guilt inexcusable, and of truth undeniable, even by himself — the murder of the duke d'Enghien. This noble youth, a grandson of the prince of Condé, and heir of that illustrious house, extinct by his death, was of course an émigré, and attached to the fortunes of his house. He inhabited a place called Ettenheim, in the duchy of Baden, only a couple of leagues distant from the French frontier, and was aware that a revolutionary movement in favour of royalism was planning in Paris. Bonaparte was at this time besieged not only by the emissaries of his minister of police, but also by those of Fouché. As there really was a plot hatching, the first consul paid more attention than he otherwise would to these reports, by which he was eternally harassed and irritated. Fouché represented the conspiracy to have assassination for its principle object. "The air is full of poniards," wrote he to Bonaparte. Then it appeared, from the depositions of some of the accused, that they "only waited for the arrival of a French prince to commence." The duke de Berri was expected at the time to land secretly near Dieppe.

Savary was sent to lie in wait for him: for Bonaparte, maddened by Fouché, felt the Corsican spirit of revenge stir within him, and was eager to spill the blood of the family which, he imagined, aimed at his life as well

as his power. That prince, however, came not. Bonaparte was disappointed; and in order to make up in every way for the disappointment, he resolved to seize on the duke d'Enghien, a Bourbon also, and expectant of the royalist insurrection. He was on neutral territory, to be sure; but Bonaparte had learned to slight international as well as moral law. He accordingly gave orders that a body of troops should surprise the castle of Ettenheim, and carry off the duke. This was put in execution on the 15th of March; and the illustrious prisoner was, without delay, hurried to the castle of Vincennes near Paris. He arrived at nine o'clock in the evening much wearied. He was nevertheless brought on that very night before a military commission, and accused of the crime of bearing arms against France.

Instead of denying the charge, the young prince avowed and gloried in it; and the commissioners, like a jury, returned a verdict of guilty, and even that reluctantly, but still with a belief that a punishment so atrociously severe in his case as death could not follow it. Besides, the duke made a request to see and speak with the first consul. Savary, however, who had orders to see judgment executed, and who had learned in Egypt implicit and oriental obedience to the word of a master, interfered. Under his direction the prisoner was made to descend about daybreak into the fosse of the château, where he found a newly dug grave and a company of gendarmes drawn up. The prince saw his fate, and submitted to it with a soldier's courage. A murder worthy of the worst days of the Revolution was perpetrated; the heir of Condé had ceased to live; and Bonaparte, endeared by this pledge to the regicides, was assured of their support in mounting the imperial throne.

In this latter view, the death of the duke d'Enghien was not so bootless a measure as has been imagined. Moreau had not yet been brought to trial. The military were attached to him; the populace believed him honest; and, at such a moment, the resurrection and exertions of the Jacobin faction might have turned the scale against Bonaparte. Some time after this catastrophe, Pichegru was found strangled in his prison; and Wright, an English captain, who had landed Cadoudal from his vessel, and who had been taken prisoner, was discovered with his throat cut. Suspicion could not but fall upon Bonaparte. Yet, why should he not have brought Pichegru to trial as well as Moreau? On the other hand, it is not probable that these men fell by their own hands. Savary inculpates Fouché. The circumstance must remain matter of mystery and conjecture. Georges Cadoudal, and the most guilty conspirators, were next dealt with. They were brought to trial, condemned, and executed. The Polignacs were, however, spared by the first consul. Moreau was next arraigned:[1] there existed no proofs whatever against him. The tribunal was inclined to acquit him. But, by a kind of negotiation betwixt the judges and the government, Moreau was condemned to two years' imprisonment; a sentence that the first consul commuted to exile. Moreau retired to the United States. Fouché, as the price of his information and activity in these affairs, was reinstated as minister of police.

Whilst the royalist plot for overthrowing the first consul's government thus failed utterly, which it needed not have done, had it been a mere purpose of assassination, the French police were long and artfully engaged in attempting to implicate the diplomatic agents of England, and to raise ground of accusation against them. Subordinate envoys were first circumvented. Numbers of adroit emissaries introduced themselves to Mr. Drake, and to

[1 It required some impudence to condemn Moreau for royalism at the very moment that his rival was re-establishing monarchy. — SEELEY.]

[1804 A.D.]

Mr. Spencer Smith, English residents at the courts of Munich and Stuttgart, receiving plans, and making promises of royalist insurrection, of betraying towns, etc. "These bulletins," Bignonc admits, "were all fabricated by the French police; the promises, only so many chimeras, with which the prefect of Strasburg fed the credulity of Mr. Drake." Poor Mr. Drake was indeed taken in. Some letters of his, in which he exulted over the speedy accomplishment of these designs, were intercepted; his folly, rather than his guilt, proclaimed; and, unfortunately, the story, garnished with unblushing falsehood, gave Bonaparte, what he so much loved, a pretext for declaiming against the Macchiavellianism of England.

It was in these petty squabbles and machinations that the meanness of Bonaparte appeared. Hitherto his life had been that of a hero—stained, indeed, with the blood of Jaffa, for which, however, he might plead the excuse of stern necessity. In fields of battle, in negotiations, in government, he had shown himself the superior spirit. But now, as he arrives at the height of power, as he doffs the hero's tunic to assume the mantle of the usurper, the vulgar Jacobin appears—rude, ruthless, tricky, envious, mendacious. Finding a worthy ally in Fouché, he condescends to make war by eavesdroppers at the doors of the envoys of his foe, rather than with armies in the field; and wields the base pen of malignity, rather than the warrior's sword. Absolute power proved fatal to him, flinging him at once into meanness and into crime. While a victorious commander of the armies of Italy, a crown could not have added to his greatness. When we first look upon him as emperor, we behold chiefly the murderer and the monarch united. Previous to this epoch, there existed still a feeling of generosity betwixt England and her enemy. But henceforth it was a personal and deadly war—a war not only of existence, but of honour; a duel not to be receded from till one or other of the antagonists fell. Unfortunate it was that France was identified in her leader's quarrel. Had she kept her liberties, that even of her press, such foul lies could not have gone forth to the world, nor been credited at home. But Bonaparte, not daring to trust his character and acts to a free press, shows sufficiently the colour of both: whilst, by yielding this precious liberty, this sun of the public mind, to a despot, after all the clamours and blood spent in the name of freedom, France becomes answerable for her own credulity, as well as for those crimes, and that injustice, which such credulity allowed him to commit.

NAPOLEON BECOMES EMPEROR (1804 A.D)

This was the epoch of Bonaparte's becoming emperor. The steps of his throne were the supposed projects of Pichegru and Georges; the blood of Enghien cemented them. Here instantly appears the great object of representing the views of the conspirators to be those of assassination. For, the life of the first consul being aimed at, it became necessary, according to the logic of the hour, to render the present rule and system permanent; that is, hereditary. And in fact the argument was right; a despotism for life is an absurdity, a complete *bonus* upon assassination; however, the way of mending the absurdity was to abate the despotism, instead of rendering it eternal. Scarcely twelve months had elapsed since the first consul had declared in council "hereditary right to be an absurdity." The senate now asserted the necessity of declaring Bonaparte hereditary sovereign, "in order to insure the public triumph of liberty and equality without fear of overthrow." This unblushing reason for perpetuating a dictatorship was worthy of the *Moniteur*

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itself. The senate having obsequiously given its adhesion, the tribunate was required to discuss the question, not constitutionally, but as if in a "private re-union of citizens."

Twenty voted for, seven against, Bonaparte's elevation to the sovereignty. To such numbers were reduced even the mock representation of France. Carnot alone, as a staunch republican, spoke boldly forth his opinion. "Shall freedom, then," said he, "be shown to man, in order that he may never enjoy it? Must it be ever offered to his vows, as a fruit, tempting indeed, but fraught with death as the consequence of touching it? Nature is then indeed but a stepmother!"

On the 18th of May, 1804, the French senate passed a decree, and presented it to the first consul, styling "Napoleon Bonaparte emperor of the French." The people at large were to be consulted as to the hereditary right implied as belonging to this title; the farce of universal suffrage was never wanting in France to sanction acts of violence or usurpation. Still here a manifest difference was observed. Whilst the votes for the consulate had been nearly four millions, with a few thousand dissentient voices, the three millions that declared for the hereditary empire were counterbalanced by upwards of two millions that protested.

The *senatus consultum*, instituting the empire, confined the descent to Joseph and Louis; excluding Lucien, who had been most instrumental in elevating his brother to the consulate; and Jerome, who was profligate, and had made a foolish marriage. Court officers, with titles of superlative magnificence, were at the same time created; Joseph was called grand elector, as if in mockery of himself and of Sieyès. Then Louis became constable; Berthier grand huntsman. Three such men, wearing three such titles, must indeed have excited the derision of the Parisians. But sarcasm is short-lived, when allowed merely to vent itself in whisper. And the French, who had at first been ashamed to wear the riband of the legion of honour, soon came to admire stars and orders, and to worship dignitaries. The second and third consuls, Cambacérès and Lebrun, became arch-chancellor and arch-treasurer; whilst seventeen of the principal generals were declared marshals of France.

The year 1804 was spent by Bonaparte in assuming his new title. It was the subject of serious negotiation with all the states of Europe, England excepted. Austria, the weakest, was the first to recognise it. The opportunity was even chosen by her for modifying her own; her sovereign, instead of elective emperor of Germany, styling himself hereditary emperor of Austria. The army, however, was the true basis of Napoleon's power; nor was he contented, until his dignity had received their full approbation.

He accordingly visited Boulogne during the summer, and in a month after his arrival there, ordered a grand review and ceremony on the 16th of August, the day of his *fête*. He was to distribute crosses of the Legion of Honour to the military.

Seated in the midst of his numerous armies, the shores of England and its fleets before him, Bonaparte was thus in presence of the foe that served as a pretext to this elevation. The troops answered his claim to the empire with loud acclamations, and he considered himself henceforth raised on the buckler, like another Clovis, to be the founder of a new dynasty. From Boulogne the new emperor hurried to Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), the ancient capital of Charlemagne. Here he received the acknowledgment of his dignity by his "brother" of Austria.

[1804 A.D.]

That nought might be wanting, the church was requested to give its sanction. Its inferior members had already displayed their zeal. The clergy, in their addresses, styled him Moses and Cyrus, applying to him the name of every biblical hero. They saw divine right in success as well as legitimacy; and proclaimed "the finger of God" as the agent of his elevation. To sum up this condescension, the pope himself made a journey to Paris, in order to crown the new Charlemagne, who, by the by, had curtailed from the church those very possessions said to have been ceded to it by the pious Frank. On the 2nd of December, 1804, the coronation took place in Notre Dame; Bonaparte, however, placing the crown on his own head as well as upon that of Josephine. Pius VII spoke an humble homily on the occasion. Comparing himself to Elias and to Samuel, Napoleon to Hazael, to Jehu, to David, and to Saul, the pontiff consecrated, in the name of the Deity, whose vicegerent on earth he was, the crown of the new emperor.[e]

BERTIN'S PICTURE OF NAPOLEON'S COURT LIFE

In surrounding himself with a court Napoleon obeyed a political impulse. He wished to conquer by dazzling; to win over to his side French vanity by supplying it with ideal distinctions; and to add to his young empire the prestige of old monarchies. But what served his interests also flattered his vanity; the greatest genius in the world may sometimes find himself enjoying the puerile satisfactions of the *parvenu*. "Come, little Creole, and get into the bed of your masters," he said to Josephine, when they established themselves at the Tuileries. Who knows that the little Corsican gentleman was not as impressed by the unheard-of installation as the little Creole? Unfortunately it is easier to change one's apartments than one's habits, and neither by birth, education, nor temperament was Bonaparte fitted for that delicate part of a sovereign's calling known as *représentation*.

Neither in war nor in garrison life could he find time and opportunity to polish his manners; and besides, good form, even outside the camp, was the least care of the new society. Never was there a crowned head less resembling that classical type which was, as it were, incarnate in Louis XIV. Think of the prince so often described by Saint-Simon[f] — the majestic grace of his walk, of his movements, of his language, his attentive and uniform politeness to rank, sex, and age, the dignity which he showed even in his smallest actions, and compare, with this model of royal decorum, the cæsar described by Madame de Rémusat.[g] What a striking and humorous contrast! His ignorance, negligence, abruptness, and violence were absolutely fatal to decorum; he neither knew how to enter a drawing-room nor how to leave it; how to sit down nor how to get up, still less which hand he should offer to a lady. At table he would snatch at the first dish within reach, often beginning his dinner with the sweets. While dressing he hurried and ill-treated the valets who assisted him, and if he did not happen to like the article of clothing handed to him, he kicked it away or threw it on the fire. He was always assuming undignified attitudes, either poking the fire with his boots, or sitting astride a chair, his chin resting on the back, in order to converse more at his ease.

One of his familiar tricks was pulling people's ears, without the least regard to their rank or sex, and Madame de Rémusat's ear often enjoyed this distinction. Imagine Louis XIV taking such liberties with one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting! If some unfortunate flatterer with the best intentions in the world expressed a wish which was contrary to his secret

[1804 A.D.]

views, he instantly became furious, put his fist under the offender's chin, even were he marshal of France, and pushed him against the wall, treating him roughly as a lunatic. Compare this behaviour with the fine movement of the Grand Monarch, throwing his cane out of the window in order to resist the temptation of striking the insolent little Lauzun, who had just accused him of breaking his word, and had shattered his sword beneath his heel, swearing never again in his life to serve under him. It is only fair to add that the court was no better informed than the sovereign in matters of etiquette. The tumult of the Revolution had swept away the old traditions of French politeness, with many other things. France — who could believe it? — no longer knew how to curtsey. Josephine's ladies, feeling themselves such novices, watched each other in consternation. Fortunately the Revolution had spared a famous dancing master, Despréaux; this person, for whom there had long been no employment, was besieged; they fought for him as the living code of manners, they hastened to learn how to become great ladies. There also remained Madame Campan, first lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette; they questioned her, and made her relate in detail the intimate habits of the queen of France. Madame de Rémusat was given the official task of writing at her dictation, the result of which was an enormous book, which increased the file of memoirs sent to Bonaparte from all directions. One might have taken them for a meeting of scholars, fathoming a question of great antiquity, whereas the object of these researches (I was about to say of these excavations) was the old court customs, which had died out fifteen years before.

They not only revived the old customs of the court of France, they also imported new ones from foreign courts. The best of it was that Bonaparte himself was the author of the importation. He was the first to be bored by it. At Munich he had seen all the court pass bowing before the king and queen of Bavaria; he also wished to have this solemn homage paid him. The march past at first delighted his imagination, and flattered his pride; but soon his impassive majesty tired him, he grew impatient, fidgeted in his seat; in short he was bored, and it was only with great difficulty that they persuaded him to keep his seat until he had received the last reverences, which were hurried on by his order.

At the time of the marriage of Stéphanie de Beauharnais with the prince of Baden, the emperor, who gave his hand to the bride, dragged rather than led her to the altar. Behind him hurried the ladies of the palace, driven by merciless chamberlains, who walked like aides-de-camp on either side of the cortège, exclaiming with little gallantry: "Come, come, ladies, move on!" A certain countess of foreign origin, accustomed to the slow movements of the courts of the north, grumbled at this procession of postillions and demanded short skirts for the ladies of the palace, so as to have the costume in keeping with the situation. Further on, at the head of the procession, M. de Talleyrand, who as grand chamberlain had to lead the way, struggled along on his thin, crooked legs; but, always master of his expression, he disguised beneath an imperturbable coolness the irritation he felt at having his impatient master at his heels, and the aides-de-camp smiling derisively.[h]

A THIRD COALITION AGAINST FRANCE

The year 1804 saw the rise of a new coalition against Bonaparte. Austria might quail under former defeats, and Prussia might well hesitate to provoke the conqueror. But Russia had no such fears, and spoke an independ-

ent language. The murder of the duke d'Enghien had excited the emperor Alexander's abhorrence. He put his court into mourning for the unfortunate prince. Gustavus of Sweden followed the example. Of the French functionaries, M. de Châteaubriand alone sent in a generous resignation; whilst Louis XVIII sent back the order of the golden fleece to his relative the monarch of Spain, who, though a Bourbon, dared not express a feeling of resentment towards France.

But it was the conduct of Alexander that most affected the French emperor. The mourning of the Russian court, and the remonstrances of its representative in Paris, were poignant injuries. Napoleon, as usual, took up the pen himself to answer them; and, as usual, falsehood and insult flowed from it. "Suppose," wrote he, "that when England meditated the assassination of the emperor Paul, the conspirators were known to be within a league of the frontier, would they not have been seized?" The allusion was a deadly and malignant insult, not so much to England, who might scorn such calumnies, but to Alexander, who had profited at least by his sire's untimely death. The Russian emperor replied by summoning the French to evacuate Hanover and Naples; and soon after his *chargé d'affaires* was ordered to leave Paris.

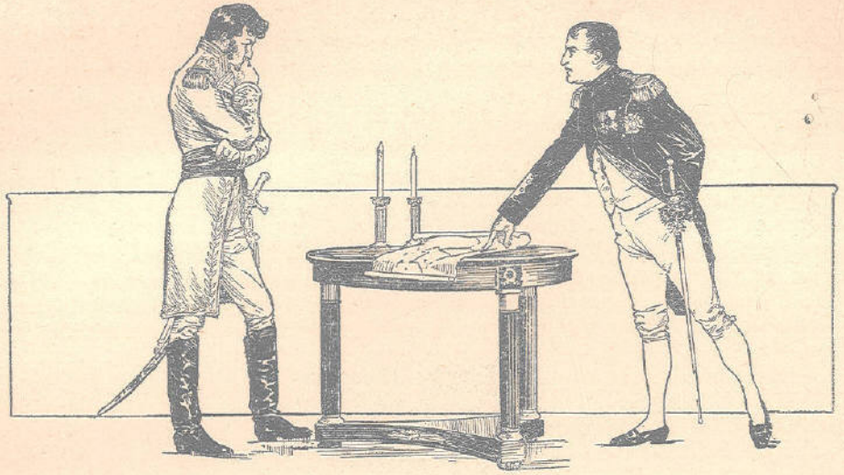
This breach accomplished the first desire of Great Britain, which was to find a continental ally against France. The death of the duke d'Enghien served her in this, and menaced its perpetrator. For a considerable time Spain had been in alliance with France, aiding her, however, with subsidies rather than with troops. England, though aware of the covert hostility of Spain, pretended not to observe it, and respected that country as neutral. But the prospect of Russian alliance made the ministry more bold; and the peace with Spain was suddenly broken by the capture of some ships of that nation returning laden with specie. It was a flagrant act of injustice, in the very style of Bonaparte's own conduct, and proceeded from the very same imbecility which threw upon England the blame of the renewal of the war — an irresolute, wavering system, which was but weakness, and which looked like treachery. England had thence to contend with the fleets of France and Spain united, an alliance which inspired Bonaparte with great hopes.

In the spring of 1805, whilst the clouds of hostility were gathering against him from the north, Bonaparte took a journey to Milan, in order to exchange his title of president of the Cisalpine Republic for that of king of Italy. Here, received with enthusiasm, he placed upon his own head, in great ceremony, the crown of Charlemagne, called iron, from a nail of the true cross which it contains. "God gave it me," exclaimed he; "beware who dares to touch it." He ordered a splendid review to take place on the plains of Marengo, and, to mark his attention to minutiæ, he had brought from Paris the same gray frock coat which he had worn at that memorable battle. But the general's habit had lain by since he had donned the imperial mantle, and worms had eaten it. Genoa, of late the Ligurian Republic, was now, by a stroke of the pen, incorporated with the empire of France. This formed one of the complaints of Austria, then pressed by England and Russia to coalesce with them, and arm. But Bonaparte had acquired the habit of filching towns, and adding territory to territory. It was incurable and inevitable; and his amazement was that people could find fault with a thing so natural.[e]

Five years had passed since Napoleon had taken the field when the second period of his military career began. He now begins to make war as a sovereign with a boundless command of means. For five years from 1805 to 1809

he takes the field regularly, and in these campaigns he founds the great Napoleonic empire. By the first he breaks up the Germanic system and attaches the minor German states to France, by the second he humbles Prussia, by the third he forces Russia into an alliance, by the fourth he reduces Spain to submission, by the fifth he humbles Austria. Then follows a second pause, during which for three years Napoleon's sword is in the sheath, and he is once more ruler, not soldier.

From the beginning of this second series of wars the principles of the Revolution are entirely forgotten by France, which is now a monarchy, even a propagator of monarchical principles.[i]



CHAPTER XIX

THE CONTINENTAL WAR TO THE PEACE OF TILSIT

[1805–1807 A.D.]

> Such intensity of hatred as burned between the new emperor and England never disturbed the councils of Carthage and Rome. The system represented by each was utterly inconsistent with the very existence of the other. Military aggression, and the maintenance of internal tranquillity by an overwhelming force wielded by one man; a settled order of things, even if not the best in itself, and a government in accordance with the general will of the country, constitutionally expressed — these were such antagonistic principles that either the despotic propagator of new ideas must fall, or the defender of existing institutions be rendered powerless. The fight, therefore, became more like a duel between two irreconcilable adversaries, in which the seconds occasionally took part, than a war urged for European or national purposes. It was for the complete destruction either of England or of Napoleon, and the enemies felt from the beginning that the battle was to the death. — WHITE.

NAPOLEON'S object in seizing Genoa is announced in one of his letters to Lebrun whom he appointed governor. That amiable man had mitigated his stern orders to press the naval population of the port. The emperor wrote him the following reprimand:

> In uniting Genoa to the empire, I was induced neither by the revenue, nor by the land forces she might contribute; I had but one object in view, *viz.*, 15,000 seamen. It is then going against the very spirit of my feeling to be lenient or backward in raising and levying this force. You are too mild, too merciful. How can you govern people without discontenting them? What would you do, if you were charged with forcing the conscripts of a couple of French departments to march to the army? I tell you, that in matters of government, force means justice as well as virtue. As to discontent of the Genoese, I am not the man to listen to such remonstrances. Think you I am decrepit enough to fear them? My answer is, Seamen, seamen, and still seamen. Govern but to collect seamen — dream but of them. Say what you will from me, but say that I will have seamen. God keep you in his holy guard! NAPOLÉON.

This most characteristic letter shows the reliance he placed on a naval struggle, and his hopes of so weakening, if not vanquishing, England by sea, as to render his project of invasion possible. It was now that he formed the project of distracting the attention of England, and scattering her fleets, by

despatching his in different directions, some to the West Indies, some to the ports of Spain, in order to effect a union betwixt all, and form a naval force capable of giving battle to the British with great superiority of numbers. The progress of fleets, however, could not be ordered or calculated in the cabinet, or over a chart. A hundred chances were against the execution of a scheme which at best was almost hopeless. For in naval actions betwixt French and English, as in land battles betwixt French and Austrians, numbers served to increase the disorder and rout of the unskilful combatant. This was soon proved. The French squadron of twenty vessels, which had gone round by the West Indies to the chosen rendezvous in the Channel, fell in on its return with a much inferior British force under Sir Robert Calder. The French were, nevertheless, defeated; and the English admiral, instead of meeting with approbation for his victory, was severely reprimanded at home for not annihilating the superior numbers of the foe.

Napoleon himself was in the meantime at Boulogne, facing England, indeed, and menacing her with invasion; but with his looks all the time directed to the east and north of Europe. He was not in the least ignorant of the coalition, or the war brewing against him; and although his tent was pitched on the heights of Boulogne, the map upon that tent-table, the object of his meditation, was the map of Austria. A conversation of his with Bourrienne displays his real opinions on this subject. "Those who believe in the seriousness of my menace of invasion are fools. They do not see the thing in its true light. I can, without doubt, disembark in England with 100,000 men, fight a great battle, win it; but I must reckon on 30,000 killed, wounded, or prisoners. If I march upon London, a second battle awaits me; suppose me again successful, what am I to do in London with an army diminished by three-fourths, without hope of reinforcements? It would be madness. Without superiority of naval force, such a project is impracticable. No; this great re-union of troops, that you behold, has another aim. My government must be the first of Europe, or it must fall."

THE THIRD COALITION (1805 A.D.)

However hostile were the intentions of Napoleon towards the still independent powers of Europe, these anticipated him in declaring war. In April, 1805, an alliance was concluded betwixt Russia and England. Hanover and Naples were to be the points, to the liberating of which their armies were to be directed. Sweden joined the alliance. Prussia approved its spirit, but those of its ministers in the French interest prevailed, and preserved the neutrality. Austria was more inclined to redeem her defeats. The coronation of the French emperor as king of the Italian dominions, which she at least expected to have been left independent, alarmed Austria and gave her a right to arm. The occupation of Genoa enforced both. The British envoy was ready with offers of subsidy, the Russians with the aid of large armies. Napoleon secured Bavaria by a promise of aggrandising her territory, and of himself making no acquisition beyond the Rhine. Austria in the meantime advanced her troops, and peremptorily demanded of the elector of Bavaria to unite with her. He temporised, practised some deceit, and succeeded in excusing himself, and drawing off his army. The Austrians occupied Munich.

Here was the aggression that Napoleon desired; for, without some such pretext, he feared the shame of abandoning the vaunted expedition against England. Thus, whilst Pitt precipitated Austria to hostilities prematurely,

ere her allies had put forth their strength, in order to remove the French from Boulogne, he precisely served the purpose of Bonaparte. This last blunder of the English minister, with its unfortunate consequences, gave the destructive blow that put an end to his life. Napoleon affected great disappointment in abandoning his scheme of invasion, called Daru, and dictated to him at a breath the entire plan of a campaign against Austria, the march of each division, its route, the time of the arrival of each, and the point of junction. This seemed like magic and improvisation to Daru, being nevertheless the result of long and mature reflection. The several divisions instantly decamped from Boulogne, taking different directions to the Rhine. The emperor hurried to Paris, and obtained from his obsequious senate the decrees necessary for carrying on the war.

THE VICTORY OF ULM (1805 A.D.)

The command of the advance Austrian army was, as if by fatuity, intrusted to Mack, that pedantic tactician, who could not defend Rome with an army against a few thousand men under Championnet. He took post at Ulm, thinking that Bonaparte must necessarily take the same road which Moreau had taken. On the contrary, the French emperor divided his numerous force into seven corps, the greater number of which were ordered to march to the Danube, and cross it behind Mack. Thus Mack, with 80,000 men, was advanced far from all support, whilst nearly 200,000 were marching to surround him. The French were in his rear ere he dreamed of it. Retreat was impossible. All that remained was to unite the Austrian army, and fall with its whole mass on one or two of the French corps. But, no — Mack scattered his troops round Ulm. Dupont checked them on one side, Ney on another. The latter achieved a brilliant feat in carrying the bridge of Elchingen, at the third assault; the name was Ney's first title. Beaten on every side, Mack was shut up with the remains of his army in the town of Ulm. The general Ségur, sent to demand his submission, found nothing but disorder, and the brain of Mack in similar confusion. He did not even know that Napoleon was his antagonist. He began by demanding "eight days' truce or death," and concluded by surrendering immediately.[1] Never was so bewildered a person. An imperial bulletin now announced:

> Soldiers, in fifteen days we have made a campaign, driven the Austrians from Bavaria; of 100,000 men, 60,090 are prisoners. Two hundred pieces of cannon, 80 stand of colours, are our trophies. A second campaign awaits us. We have to combat the Russians, whom England has transported from the ends of the universe. This battle will decide the honour of the French infantry, and will tell if it be the first or the second in Europe.

On the day after, the 21st of October, was fought the battle of Trafalgar,[2] where Nelson, annihilating the fleets of Spain and France, bequeathed to Bonaparte the cruel certainty, that, if invincible on land, his great rival was equally so upon the ocean.

[1 On the 19th, 30,000 men, headed by 16 generals, 60 guns, 40 standards, and 3,000 horses passed before the French army, drawn up in battle array on the heights of the Michaelsberg and the Frauenberg. Napoleon surrounded by his staff and his guard, was secretly elated at a triumph hitherto unknown to him amongst his most brilliant victories of Italy and Egypt.*d*

[2 Ulm concealed Trafalgar from the view of the continent. It was the stroke of Marengo repeated but without a doubtful battle and without undeserved good luck. After Marengo it had been left to Moreau to win the decisive victory and to conclude the war; this time there was no Moreau to divide the laurels. — SEELEY.*e*

The account of the battle of Trafalgar and of most of the naval affairs of the contest will be found in the history of the nation that usually won them — England.]

Bonaparte now advanced into Austria, his lieutenants driving all before them as they advanced. On the 15th of November, Napoleon made his entry into Vienna. The Austrian emperor and his troops had retired into Moravia; for the Russians, whom Mack had expected at Ulm, were only now at Brünn. Napoleon was now not only master of Vienna, but of the neighbouring bridge over the Danube. Lannes had won it by an act of unexampled audacity. He had advanced on the bridge, speaking to the Austrian officers, alluding to a probable armistice, and distracting their attention, whilst a column of grenadiers followed him. As the Austrian officers were before their cannon and around Lannes, the artillery could not fire; when the former expostulated, Lannes gained time by excuses; and when the word to fire was about to be given, he overthrew the officer, the French rushed on the cannon, turned them; and the important bridge, securing a passage over the Danube, was won, we may say, in jest. Such was Austrian simplicity.

The first Russian army — it marched in two bodies — had advanced under Kutusoff. Hearing of the capture of Vienna, Kutusoff hurried back to Brünn. He feared to be cut off from the other body of his compatriots, and with some reason. Murat attacked him; but the French general allowing himself to be deceived by the proposal of an armistice, Kutusoff made good his retreat.

The French occupied Brünn. The emperors of Russia and Austria had rallied at Olmütz. They were at the head of 80,000 men, whilst Bonaparte did not muster more than 60,000. He had had to garrison Vienna; and to leave troops to watch the archduke Charles, who was in South Austria, pressed by Masséna, but still in force. A battle became a matter of absolute necessity to Napoleon, far advanced as he was in an enemy's country; Hungary unoccupied on one side, Bohemia on the other; Prussia, too, was menacing. The French, in their rapid march to intercept Mack, had passed through the Prussian territories of Anspach, and thus afforded a pretext for war. An envoy now arrived from Berlin; but the emperor told him to stay his message until a battle, which was imminent, should be decided.

THE TRIUMPH OF AUSTERLITZ (DECEMBER 2ND, 1805)

The Russians and Austrians, having united all their forces, determined to act on the offensive. On the 27th of November they marched from Olmütz towards the French, who were concentrated to the eastward of Brünn. Napoleon, who had studied the ground in his rear, retreated before the enemy, drawing his right wing back more than the rest of the army. Kutusoff, seeing this, and taking it for weakness, determined to turn the right wing of the French, and so threaten to cut off their army from Vienna.[1] Bonaparte thus, by drawing his army as nearly as was wise to one point, suggested to his enemies the idea of turning and surrounding him; a dangerous project for them, since it extended their lines, and exposed their weak points to an enemy, vigilant, drawn together, and enabled to protrude

[1 Such had been Napoleon's rashness, for his audacious daring was balanced indeed by infinite cunning and ingenuity, but was seldom tempered by prudence. In this position, it may be asked, how could he expect ever to make his way back to France? What he had done to Mack Prussia would now do to him. The army of Frederick would block the Danube between him and France, while the Russians and Austrians united under the archduke would seek him at Vienna. As at Marengo, fortune favoured his desperate play. The allies had only to play a waiting game, but this the Russians and their young czar, who was now in the Moravian headquarters, would not consent to do.*e*]

an overwhelming force in any one direction. Had the Russians had an idea that this retreat and concentration of the French were dictated by art, they would of course not have committed themselves. But the French did everything to affect hesitation and timidity; they not only retired, but, in partial encounters, showed a disposition to fly. To the proposals of Alexander, Bonaparte answered hesitatingly. He received the aide-de-camp sent to him on the outskirts of the camp, as if to avoid its weak state being seen. Works were thrown up. An interview, as the pretext for a four-and-twenty hours' truce, was begged. In short, a hundred petty artifices were employed to persuade the Russians that the French meditated a retreat; and that the former should lose no time, not only to attack, but also to intercept.

On the 1st of December the combined army fell completely into the trap. The chief force was pushed on to the extreme left, whilst the troops of the rest of the line, diminished for this purpose, descended from heights in front of the French, in order to move towards the left also. Bonaparte watched anxiously the motions of the enemy in advance of Austerlitz; and no sooner did his acute eye perceive their forces thrown to their left, and the number, in front of him, on and around the line of heights diminished, than he exclaimed, "That army shall be at our mercy ere to-morrow's sun sets." Nay, so certain was he of this, that he determined to communicate his confidence to his soldiers; and informed them in a printed circular or order of the day, that "the enemy, in marching to turn the French right, had exposed their own flank." On the evening of the 1st the firing commenced on the menaced point, the right of the French. Napoleon galloped thither, made his disposition for the morrow, and returned on foot through the ranks and bivouacs of his soldiery. The morrow was to be the anniversary of his coronation; they promised him the Russian colours and cannon as a gift in honour of his *fête*.

The sun rose on the 2nd of December with unclouded brilliancy; it was hailed and remembered long as the sun of Austerlitz. Its rays discovered the Austrians and Russians disseminated on, around, and behind the heights before the village of Austerlitz, whence the allied emperors watched the first effect of their chief effort against the French right. Here the battle began; Soult and Davout supporting the attack with their wonted activity and skill, greatly aided by their positions, which were amongst flooded and marshy ground, with the ice too weak to support the tread. All that Bonaparte required of these generals was to hold their ground for a certain number of hours; his aim being to attack simultaneously with his left and centre that portion of the enemy in front of him, which he proposed to cut off from their engaged wing. No sooner, however, did he hear the sound of battle fully engaged in that direction, than he gave the word. His generals hurried from him, each to his post; Lannes, Bernadotte, Legrand, Saint-Hilaire, each at the head of his division, advanced. The allied columns at this moment were descending from the heights, in the direction of their left, where they looked for the brunt of the battle. The Russians were thus surprised, and attacked during an oblique march, by columns their equals or superiors in strength. They were cut in two, routed, and separated one from the other. The French gained the heights, pushing their enemies into the defiles. This, no doubt, took time to effect; but the details can be imagined, if the manœuvres be comprehended, and the result seized.

Between Austerlitz and the heights thus won by the French was still the Russian reserve, with the emperor in person; his choicest troops, the guard for instance, commanded by the grand duke Constantine. These two were

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marching towards the left, when to their astonishment the French skirmishers and cavalry charged in amongst them. It was a scene of surprise and confusion. The emperor, however, aided by Kutusoff, rallied his men. The Russian guards and other regiments charged; and the French, a moment since victorious, were driven back. Some regiments that had even formed squares were broken into and routed by the impetuosity of the Russians. Napoleon did not see what was taking place, Austerlitz being hidden from him by the heights. His ear, however, caught sounds that did not augur victory, and he instantly sent Rapp, his aide-de-camp, to see what was the matter. Rapp galloped off with some squadrons of the guard, rallied stragglers as he advanced, and saw, as he came up, the menacing position of affairs — the Russians victorious, and sabring the French, who were driven from their broken squares. They were already bringing cannon to play upon Rapp, when the latter, crying out to his men, "to avenge their comrades and restore the day," charged at full speed amongst the Russians. This gave the routed French time to breathe and rally. They grouped and formed; Rapp returned to the charge. Half an hour's obstinate struggle and carnage took place, which terminated in the rout of the Russian guards before the eyes of the two emperors.

This feat achieved, Rapp rode back to acquaint Napoleon that all the foe in the direction of Austerlitz were in flight. On other points victory had been already assured. The left of the allies — the left, on the efforts of which so much had been built — was now cut off; it was completely destroyed or taken. The most dreadful feature of its rout was the attempt of several squadrons to escape over the lakes; the ice at once gave way under the accumulated weight, and thousands of brave men perished.

Such was Austerlitz. Savary[e] had best summed it up in calling it "a series of manœuvres, not one of which failed, that cut the Russian army, surprised in a side march, into as many portions as columns were directed against it." All have seen Gérard's picture of the battle, or rather of its conclusion, where Rapp is seen riding up, with broken sword and bleeding front, to tell the tidings of his complete success.[1] It represents that fact. Of 80,000 combatants, the allies lost nearly one-half, of which 10,000 were slain.

On the evening of the battle, the emperor of Austria sent to demand an interview with Napoleon. It was arranged for the 4th, and took place within a few leagues of Austerlitz, by the fire of a bivouac. The sovereigns embraced, and remained two hours in conversation, during which the principal terms of an agreement were of course discussed. Napoleon showed forbearance and magnanimity. The emperor of Russia retired to his dominions. He professed great admiration for the French hero, but refused to enter into any treaty, or even to acknowledge him as emperor. The part of the king of Prussia was most difficult. He had been ready to join the coalition.

[1 The battle of Austerlitz brought the third coalition to an end, as that of Hohenlinden had brought the second. It was a transformation-scene more bewildering than even that of Marengo, and completely altered the position of Napoleon before Europe. To the French indeed Austerlitz was not, as a matter of exultation, equal to Marengo, for it did not deliver the state from danger, but only raised it from a perilous eminence to an eminence more perilous still. But as a military achievement it was far greater, exhibiting the army at the height of its valour and organisation (the illusion of liberty not yet quite dissipated) and the commander at the height of his tactical skill; and in its historical results it is greater still, ranking among the great events of the world. For not only did it found the ephemeral Napoleonic empire by handing over Venetia to the Napoleonic monarchy of Italy, and Tyrol, and Vorarlberg to Napoleon's new client Bavaria; it also destroyed the Holy Roman Empire while it divided the remains of Hither Austria between Würtemberg and Baden.c]

Count von Haugwitz had arrived, prepared to use the language of menace; but finding Napoleon successful, he complimented him upon his victory. "This is a congratulation," was the reply, "of which fortune has changed the address." In proportion as he had shown forbearance to Austria, he gave way to vituperation and anger against Prussia. He railed against treachery and false friends; and, in short, so frightened Haugwitz, that the latter concluded a treaty, resigning Anspach and Bayreuth on the part of Prussia, and accepting Hanover in lieu.

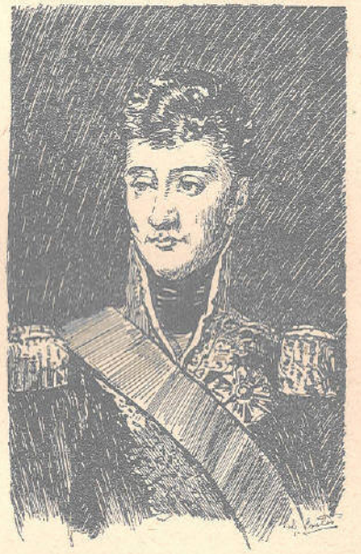
It was Napoleon's object thus to set England and Prussia at variance. It was singular enough that, almost at the same moment, Hardenberg, the Prussian minister, required the assistance of England, conjointly with Russia, in case she should be attacked; and both these incompatible agreements were soon before the cabinet of Berlin, to its no small embarrassment. It drew back from the difficulty as best it might, accepting Hanover merely as a *depôt*, and yielding Anspach as Haugwitz had consented, with Cleves, Berg, and Neuchâtel; the latter two principalities were bestowed upon Murat and Berthier. Soon after, the Treaty of Pressburg was signed between France and Austria, the latter power ceding Venice and its Dalmatian territories to the kingdom of Italy, and the Tyrol to Bavaria. The elector of Bavaria was raised, as well as the duke of Würtemberg, to the rank of king; and the dominions of the new monarchs increased by the influence of France. Thus Napoleon commenced his plan, afterwards developed in the Confederation of the Rhine, of exercising himself that influence over the German states which the empire held of old, and which of late had been shared and disputed by Prussia as head of the Protestant interest.

NAPOLEON AS KING-MAKER

Napoleon had declared to his own senate, and to the emperor of Austria, that he sought no aggrandisement for France. This declaration was with him a kind of *nolo episcopari*, or *nolo regnare*, which was a certain forerunner of fresh acquisitions. Venice and Dalmatia acquired to the kingdom of Italy was a commencement. An army of English and Russians had invaded Naples. The French emperor now determined to occupy that country, and expel from thence its reigning house. This was effected by his mere command. He had made kings in Germany of the rulers of Bavaria and Würtemberg. This was merely trying his hand at monarch-making; and at the same time Berthier and Murat were created German princes. Now his chancellor and treasurer, Cambacérès and Lebrun, were created dukes; one of Parma, the other of Piacenza or Plaisance. The lately acquired provinces of Venice were declared duchies, and assigned to the generals and statesmen of the imperial court. Joseph Bonaparte, elder brother of Napoleon, was declared king of Naples; and Louis, king of Holland; the latter was a mild domestic character; he had espoused Hortense Beauharnais, the daughter of Josephine.

This princess had been a great favourite with Napoleon; so much so, that calumny had attached criminality to their friendship. We believe this to be false. Hortense, whose character strikes us in a more interesting light, as having composed that well-known air and song, *Partant pour la Syrie*, was attached to the brave Duroc, who, perhaps shaken by the calumnies which assailed her, desisted from following up the suit which he had at first paid. Napoleon, who was not adverse to this match, on its being broken off gave Hortense to his brother Louis — an event that made both unhappy. Such were the new king and queen of Holland.

Napoleon could scarcely pardon himself for the crime of ignoble marriage, which he so severely reproached and visited upon his brothers Lucien and Jerome. These had no share in the honours of the day. His sisters were now all elevated to rank. Caroline espoused Murat the duke of Berg; Elisa was given the sovereignty of Lucca; and Pauline, the youngest, widow of General Leclerc, brought Guastalla in dowry to the Roman prince Borghese: Eugene Beauharnais at the same time married the daughter of the king of Bavaria; Talleyrand became prince of Benevento, Bernadotte of Pontecorvo.



JEROME BONAPARTE
(1784–1860)

In the great struggle of France for European supremacy, if not for universal dominion, to which circumstances partly impelled, and ambition partly prompted Bonaparte, there is neither space nor interest to spare for the pettier details of internal administration, the preparation of codes, or the financial crisis which, at the epoch of Austerlitz, paralysed the commerce, and nearly ruined the bank, of France. Diplomacy and war occupy the entire scene, and demand to possess it exclusively. In the commencement of 1806, some weeks after the battle of Austerlitz, Pitt breathed his last. On Fox's succeeding to him, there was some expectation of peace; and intercourse commenced by a letter of that statesman, warning the French emperor of an offer made to assassinate him. Negotiations followed, to which the great obstacle of success seemed to be, that the French insisted upon Sicily in addition to Naples. The most remarkable circumstance connected with these negotiations is the anxiety of Talleyrand to conclude a peace, and the sagacious and almost prophetic views on which were founded this anxiety. He saw clearly, and said that without a peace with England, Napoleon would go on warring, fighting battle after battle; which, with every chance in his favour, was still continuing to gamble, and to stake his fortune upon a throw.

THE CONFEDERATION OF THE RHINE (1806 A.D.)

The only independent power bordering on France — for France now extended to the Elbe — was Prussia. She had acted altogether a most unworthy and imprudent part. We have spoken of the two treaties; one signed by Haugwitz with Napoleon, the other by Hardenberg with England, both in December, 1805. Perplexed by her bad faith, Prussia obtained the advantage of neither; she naturally hesitated to accept Hanover, and to shut her ports against England; but as Anspach and Cleves, ceded by Haugwitz, were already seized by the French, Prussia resolved to break with England rather than not get an equivalent; and her troops, accordingly, occupied Hanover. England raised an outcry. Fox declared the conduct of Prussia to be "everything that was contemptible in servility, and all that was odious in rapacity." Prussia had dishonoured herself for

the sake of Hanover and the French alliance; what then was her mortification on learning, through the English papers, that Napoleon had offered to restore Hanover to Great Britain as the price of peace! Nothing was more evident, than that the French emperor was merely making a tool of Prussia, and that he was prepared to crush her, to slight her, and to seize the first pretext for both.

The accomplishment of a new scheme of Napoleon was still more alarming to Prussia. This was the confederation of the Rhine, by which the smaller German states, which hitherto had met or sent their envoys to a diet, presided over by the emperor of Germany, were incorporated into a new federation, of which France was the head. These states were bound in alliance, defensive and offensive, with the French emperor; the quantity of their contingents fixed; so that, in fact, Napoleon became suzerain of the greater part of Germany. Austria could make no resistance to a measure, which she had almost proposed, in declaring her emperor's title hereditary. That sovereign now abdicated the ancient authority over Germany, which his ancestors, for so many centuries, had possessed.[1] With his declaration, in 1806, may be considered to terminate the reign of the modern cæsars.

The confederation of the Rhine, though drawn up, agreed on, and signed in July, was still kept secret for some time, and its ratification delayed. Negotiations were going on with England and with Russia; and had they succeeded, at least had that with England succeeded, the new scheme of usurpation would have been kept back and in reserve until a favourable opportunity occurred for declaring it. Peace with England, however, failing to be accomplished, and the war party getting the uppermost in Russia, Bonaparte ratified and publicly announced the confederation of the Rhine, flinging it, like a bold defiance, in the face of the powers that still resisted him.

WAR WITH PRUSSIA

Prussia was instantly in a state of mistrust and alarm, increased by learning that Napoleon had offered to restore Hanover to England. The French, indeed, made offers; invited Frederick to form, on his side, a similar confederacy in the north, and to assume the imperial title also. But the court of Berlin, though flattered by the proposal, received on all sides too many proofs of the bad faith, and slighting, if not hostile, intentions of France, to put trust in her offers. The breaking off of negotiations between Great Britain, Russia, and France, took place in July, 1806, as did the ratification of the confederacy of the Rhine. In August, Prussia sounded the trump of war, by increasing her army, and calling forth its reserves. Cause she might have for this act; yet not more cause than the last ten years might have afforded. Had Prussia united with Austria in the second or third coalition, before that power had received a final and stunning blow, France might, in all probability, not have succeeded in establishing a tyrannic supremacy over Europe. But selfish timidity kept her arms tied then; and now, when the French emperor was in his might, in the pride of victory, when Austria was humbled, Prussia steps forth, like a David before the great Goliath, but without either meriting or possessing that divine protection of the Israelite.

[1 The emperor of Austria of his own accord renounced the empty title of emperor of Germany. Thus was the old Germanic Empire at an end. This was the most dangerous act that Napoleon had yet committed. To place so large a part of German territory under the yoke of France was to prepare an inevitable reaction amongst all the German peoples, and to unite one day against us, in a deadly struggle, Prussia and Austria supported by England and Russia. —HENRI MARTIN.]

If it was imprudence in Prussia to have decided upon war, it was madness not to have sought and awaited the aid of Russia and Great Britain. For the sake of forcing the alliances of Saxony and Hesse, the Prussian army was advanced south to Weimar, far from its own territory, and from Russian aid. The blunder of Mack at Ulm was repeated.

The king of Prussia bade the French quit Germany, whose soil they had no right to tread. Napoleon returned the bravado most ungenerously, by making not Frederick, but his queen, the object of his attack. A French bulletin says, "The queen of Prussia is with the army, clothed as an Amazon, wearing the uniform of her regiment of dragoons, and penning twenty letters a day, in order to kindle flames on every side. One might believe her to be Armida out of her senses, setting fire to her own palace. Near her is the young prince Ludwig, overflowing with valour, and expecting vast renown from the vicissitudes of war. Echoing these two illustrious personages, the entire court cries, 'To war!' But when war shall have come, with all its horrors, it is then that each will vainly endeavour to clear himself of the guilt of having drawn down its thunders upon the peaceable countries of the north."

The French army came from the south. The road by which the Prussians had come, by which they must retreat, and along which were their magazines, ran from Weimar, where they were, in a northeastern direction to Leipsic, and by consequence obliquely to the French. Bonaparte resolved to march upon it, rather than upon Weimar, and thus cut off the Prussians from their home and their magazines. This was effected; the only resistance being made at Saalfeld by Prince Ludwig. But the Prussians, unsupported, were driven in, and Ludwig himself slain by a sergeant, who in vain called to him to surrender. The French now occupied the course of the Saale, their backs to Germany; whilst the Prussians were obliged to turn theirs to France, in facing the enemy that had intercepted them. To dislodge these, and restore the intercepted communications, was now the chief object of the Prussians. The greater part of their army marched with the king and the duke of Brunswick, to dislodge Davout, whom they met in advance of Nuremberg at Auerstädt.

The rest of the Prussians, under Prince Hohenlohe, advanced against the main army of the French, which was at Jena, commanded by Napoleon himself. The two encounters, that at Jena and at Auerstädt, took place on the same day, the 14th of October.[g]

JENA AND AUERSTÄDT (OCTOBER 14TH, 1806)

The emperor surveyed the ranks, speaking to each man one of those sayings which he so well knew how to throw into his beautiful and noble historical language, kindling a noble ardour in the heart of the army. "Remember," he said, "the taking of Ulm, and the battle of Austerlitz; the Prussians are reduced to the same extremity; they have lost their lines of operation, they are hemmed in, and are only fighting to assure their retreat. Soldiers," he cried, "the Prussians wish to attempt to cut their way through —the corps which allows them to pass will be lost to honour; do you hear? — lost to honour." These words raised the liveliest enthusiasm. Then Napoleon gave them some directions for withstanding the renowned Prussian cavalry. "It is now that the honour of the infantry must show itself; the French are an armed race." Then the skirmishers deployed at the foot of the plateau.[h]

The battle of Jena, taken alone, does not present any masterly or decisive manœuvre. Where Napoleon showed his skill, was in the ordering of his march, which forced these decisive actions. On the field, however, he was not wanting. His force was concentrated upon a high and narrow plain, in front of Jena. His artillery could with great difficulty be brought into position. The emperor, who looked to all himself, was obliged to stand the greater part of the night in seeing a road cleared for it, he himself holding torches, and directing the labours of the pioneers. The morning of the 14th was foggy; the armies could not discern each other; and the Prussians, ignorant of the French position, knew not where to direct their attacks. Ney, however, attacked their left, and was beaten back, till Soult arrived to his support. As the fog cleared up at midday, the engagement became general. The Prussians could take no advantage of their successful resistance on many points. Charge after charge poured on them, was repelled, and allowed to form again. At length, Augereau arriving against their right with fresh infantry, and Murat coming up with his cavalry, the Prussians were defeated, gave up the field, and fled.

Davout at the same time had a much harder task than Napoleon. He had to make head against a Prussian force double his own, led on, moreover, by its sovereign and commander-in-chief. Napoleon was not aware of this, thinking, on the contrary, the main army of the Prussians to be at Jena; neither was Davout, until engaged. When the latter sent to Bernadotte to aid him, this general, under the same impressions, refused; which afterwards proved a great cause of, or pretext for, the emperor's severity towards him. At Auerstädt, as at Jena, a fog prevented the armies from observing each other's force, but not from coming to action. There was an obstinate fight. As the day grew clear, the French saw the numerous army which menaced them; utterly destitute, too, as they were, of cavalry. They drew up instantly in squares, and thus withstood all the efforts of the Prussian horse led on by Blücher. When these were obliged to retreat, the French rose and drove in the infantry in front of them, breaking the centre of the Prussians.

Again they formed in squares to resist fresh efforts of the duke of Brunswick and Prince William of Prussia, who led the cavalry to the charge. Fortune aided the valour of the French. All the Prussian generals were severely wounded, Brunswick himself, Schmettau, Wartensleben, and Prince William. Their troops were obliged to retreat. Lastly, the king himself made a gallant effort to restore the fortunes of the day in vain. The centre being broken, all the efforts of the wings could not produce a serious result. The Prussians, with their monarch, turned their backs; and the routed troops from both Jena and Auerstädt, as they mingled in their flight to Weimar, informed each other of the extent of the disaster.[g]

All this strategy must be recapitulated; two battles took place on October the 14th, within six leagues of each other, one at Auerstädt, the other at Jena. In the first, 26,000 French, commanded by Marshal Davout, withstood the pick of the Prussian army, nearly twice their number; in the second, at Jena, Napoleon, with a third more men than the Prussian and Saxon corps of Möllendorf, easily vanquished their columns: Jena was an engagement, Auerstädt the battle. Bernadotte was in the centre of the position. As for Davout, his was a more memorable triumph; the honours of that great day were his; if Napoleon barely mentioned his name in his bulletin, as he all but omitted that of Marshal Soult in the report of the battle of Austerlitz, these omissions must be attributed to jealousy. Napoleon never exalted his rivals in glory; he only praised military mediocrities, or men who incorporated themselves in him. No one else must be nigh when the emperor radiated in his glory.[h]

THE OPPRESSION OF PRUSSIA

If the statesmanship of the king of Prussia had been neither noble nor wise, he, as well as his family and nation, at least vindicated their honour, even on the field which they lost. In his flight, Frederick sent to demand an armistice of Napoleon. It was refused, and on the following day Erfurt surrendered to Murat, with near 100 pieces of artillery, 14,000 men, and numerous magazines. The French pushed on without intermission towards Berlin. Napoleon had avenged the defeat of the French at Rossbach, but forgot his wonted generosity in victory, when he took away from the field the commemorative column, and sent it to Paris.[1] He at the same time liberated all his Saxon prisoners, in order to attach that elector to his interests.

On the 27th of October, Napoleon entered Berlin at the head of his guards, in the midst of the silent tears of its population. Napoleon showed himself far more severe towards Prussia than towards Austria; yet Prussia had shown him less inveteracy. But he reverenced the antiquity of the imperial house, whilst his plan of shutting all the seaports of Europe against England rendered it necessary that he should be perfectly master of Prussia. His conduct to the princess of Hatzfeldt is, however, an exception. The prince, who was civil governor of Berlin, had been rudely received by Napoleon. A letter of his, directed to his fugitive monarch, was intercepted; the emperor caused him to be seized and tried by a court martial. The fate of Palm, a poor bookseller, who had been condemned for some libel against Napoleon, and executed in consequence, showed that the French cared little for legal forms. The princess therefore hurried to Napoleon, flung herself at his feet, and craved the pardon of her husband. For reply, he handed her the intercepted letter, the proof of the prince's offence, and bade her burn it.

Frederick, in the meantime, had fled behind the Oder. Fortress after fortress had surrendered. Spandau had fallen at once; Magdeburg, the bulwark of the kingdom, after a short siege; and Blücher alone supported in flight the national character for ability and courage. He made a daring retreat amongst the French divisions, which pursued and crossed his path, and at length, shutting him up in Lübeck, forced him to surrender. Thus in one action had the power of Prussia been not only shaken, but destroyed. Prussia, after a long peace, started up against Napoleon in his might. The superior nationality of Austria also contributed to give her the advantage, but this not so much as is generally argued.

At Berlin, Napoleon had to enter once more upon the task of organising a new empire. All the smaller states of Germany were now compelled to make part of his confederation. Saxony was treated with lenience, Hesse-

[1] After Napoleon's return from Austerlitz, Denon presented him with divers medals illustrative of his victories. The first represented a French eagle tearing an English leopard. "What's this?" asked the emperor. Denon explained. "You rascally flatterer, you say that the French eagle crushes the English leopard; yet I cannot put a fishing-boat to sea that is not taken: I tell you it is the leopard that strangles the eagle. Melt down the metal, and never bring me such another." He found similar fault with the medal of Austerlitz. "Put Battle of Austerlitz on one side with the date, the French, Russian, and Austrian eagles on the other, without distinction. Posterity will distinguish the vanquished."

Cassel and Brunswick with severity. The emperor had even an idea of converting Prussia into a republic; of which, no doubt, he himself was to become in time president, consul, and king. But he soon gave up the hopeless plan of forcing himself upon the honest allegiance of the Germans. His armies now occupied Hamburg, a free city, against which the emperor had no assignable cause of war. To strike a great commercial port with nullity, and shut it against the English, was his object.

THE BERLIN DECREES OF 1806

But all Bonaparte's acts, even his conquests, were surpassed in audacity by the famous Berlin decrees. They were accompanied by numerous reports, and prefaced by such logic as the law of 500,000 bayonets might deign to use. Bonaparte commences by saying,

> "England admits no law of nations, in that she captures the merchant vessels, as well as the armed ships of her enemy, together with the French crews of the former; in that she blockades ports unfortified as well as fortified, and declares in a state of blockade whole coasts and ports before which she can scarcely keep a single vessel."

This last is the only plausible charge; those which precede it are mere raving. Since, were Bonaparte's edition of the law of nations to be put in force, France might on land overrun and pillage the whole continent, whilst she might completely shelter her coast from her enemy by destroying the fortifications of every port, and be able at the same time to reap the gains of commerce on one side, and the plunder of war on the other. In order to establish these convenient rules, or rather until they were established, Napoleon decreed Great Britain to be in a state of blockade, forbade all commerce and correspondence with it. Every Englishman found in any country was prisoner of war; all English property, anywhere found, was confiscated. No ship coming from England or her colonies, or having touched at her ports, was to be received in any harbour; or if any arrived, it was to be confiscated.

Such was the decree by which Bonaparte endeavoured to shut out England from the continent at the expense of neutral and independent nations. This he intended to enforce in every port throughout the whole circuit of Europe, from St. Petersburg round to Constantinople. This scheme of wounding Great Britain by crippling her commerce, resembled, in its magnitude, its impracticability, and its ill-success, his plan of destroying her Asiatic commerce by invading Egypt. Both recoiled upon himself; for nought more than the severities of the continental system, as that of these decrees is called, alienated from Napoleon the affections of the middle classes both of his subjects and of his allies. Whilst the conscription, or its extreme enforcement, wounded their parental affections, the system deprived moderate fortunes of the common and customary luxuries of life. Sugar rose to eight and ten shillings a pound; coffee and all colonial produce tantamount; whilst the temptation to contraband trade, and the corresponding vexations of the excise, excited that perpetual war betwixt government and governed, which is the most fruitful source of disaffection.

NAPOLEON IN POLAND

Meantime, an attempt at negotiation on the part of the king of Prussia, who had retired to Königsberg, met with no result. Napoleon demanded the cession of all the country betwixt the Rhine and the Elbe; he had

already conceived the project of establishing the kingdom of Westphalia in favour of his young brother Jerome. Russia was still unconquered, and Frederick William hoped that the power of Alexander might in a fortunate battle put a check to the ascendency of the French. Unluckily for this hope, war broke out at this moment betwixt Russia and Turkey. A young military envoy, Sébastiani, whom Napoleon had sent to Constantinople, contrived in a few days of intrigue to destroy the amicable relations existing not only between Russia and the Porte, but between England and that its "ancient ally." In a moment, the invasion of Egypt by France, and its defence by England, were forgotten; and the French ambassador was seen arming the batteries of Constantinople, and commanding its militia, against the British.

Napoleon himself now advanced in pursuit of the Prussian monarch, after issuing a proud proclamation to his soldiers, in which he informed them that "they had conquered on the Elbe and the Oder, the French possessions in the Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Spanish colonies." All the glories of Austerlitz and Jena appeared nothing, unless partly won at the expense of England. The emperor was now at Posen, the capital of that part of Poland acquired by Prussia. From thence he went to Warsaw. Here naturally occurred the great question of re-establishing the ancient kingdom of Poland. Napoleon might have called himself the avenger of Poland, and might have called it into being. It would indeed have been his wisest policy, a piece of generosity that might, in the future crisis of his fortune, have saved him from general ruin. But Napoleon was too selfish; he preferred raising up a kingdom for his worthless brother Jerome, to restoring one of the most ancient and heroic in Europe. There were difficulties in the way, no doubt. Prussia should disgorge the province of Posen; Austria, that of Galicia. But Austria might have been indemnified. At the sight of Russian and Prussian eagles flying from Warsaw, the Poles were in exultation. Their patriotism and national spirit revived; they re-assumed their national dress, and their youth crowded into the Polish regiments now formed to act in concert with the French. Napoleon was resolved, indeed, to make use of their zeal; but to reward it by national independence was a stretch of generosity requiring efforts and sacrifices from which he shrank. "Shall the throne of Poland be re-established? Shall the nation resume its existence, and start from the tomb to life? God alone, who holds in his hand the combinations of events, is the arbiter of this great political problem. But certainly never were circumstances more memorable, or more worthy of interest." Such was the vague language respecting Poland of the imperial bulletins.

The Russian armies had abandoned Warsaw, but were still not far from this capital and from the Vistula, where Napoleon intended to pass the winter with his army, pressing the siege of Dantzic, and awaiting the 80,000 fresh conscripts, which he demanded to be with him before the spring. It was necessary, however, to clear his front, and intimidate the Russians, a new enemy, by some striking feat. Lannes, for this purpose, attacked the Russian corps under Bennigsen at Pultusk; but that general made a stubborn and skilful resistance; he manœuvred so as to expose the French to a dreadful fire of artillery, which wounded their chiefs, and occasioned great slaughter. Bennigsen was at last, indeed, obliged to retreat; but the French lost their aim, and, instead of disheartening, gave fresh confidence to the Russians. Bonaparte ordered his army into the winter quarters first designed. Here, however, the French were not allowed to remain more than the first fortnight of the year, 1807, in repose.

CAPEFIGUE'S ACCOUNT OF THE EYLAU CAMPAIGN

The hard frost had set in, and Napoleon remained at Warsaw in the midst of receptions, concerts, of all the festivals and pomps of a refined court. Those around him seemed to notice a characteristic change in him; he had become indolent, somewhat indifferent about his troops; he had forsaken the bivouac for the palace — the cold seemed to paralyse him. This was no longer the general of Austerlitz, sleeping on December 2nd in an outhouse of deal. Was Warsaw destined to become the Capua of the new Hannibal? Napoleon worked in his cabinet on the civil affairs of his empire, and public matters occupied him, in the eyes of the Russians, who, he believed, had also gone into winter quarters; this need of sheltering himself behind walls was in itself a remarkable change in Napoleon! Was he already growing old? The emperor, with his iron constitution, had nevertheless not forgotten the warm climate of Ajaccio; this biting cold seemed to take from him the free use of his faculties; grown idle, he preferred the glowing log, where the wood of the fir tree crackled in the flames, to the activity of a snow-covered battle-field.

This caused a certain confusion in the army's movements; each marshal acted according to his own judgment, orders were badly carried out; now Ney would step forward and compromise the fate of the army by an impulsive act; the next day it would be Murat wheeling like a madman around the Vistula. They dug the earth in search of potatoes, and the horses ate the straw off the cottages from hunger. The banks of the Vistula were without vegetation and the shops were empty; plenty existed only in the palace at Warsaw, where Napoleon lacked nothing — not even the rich pelisses of northern Asia, lined with gorgeous furs. The soldier alone was dying of cold and hunger.

However, the Russians were not idle: their winter quarters consisted of the plain; they were pleased at the sight of the frozen ground; they pranced around the emperor's winter quarters. Bennigsen was perfectly aware of the demoralised condition of the French army in Warsaw, and with his hussar-like promptitude and daring, he resolved to surprise it by a forward movement. The Russian plan of operations depended upon two most important strongholds, Königsberg and Dantzic; the emperor, with his instinct for great matters, had seen that nothing serious could be undertaken until these two fortresses were in his possession; the one depended upon the other.

Bennigsen's march had for base Königsberg and Dantzic: then, supported from these two points, he was to surprise the French army and force it to quit Warsaw, where it was settled in its winter quarters. This movement was most daring. The Russians were first of all to fall upon Marshal Ney, who was imprudently engaged, always to the fore like a brave and worthy knight; they could not cut him off; Bernadotte supported him with his eminently military genius. Without Bernadotte, Ney would have been overwhelmed. Bernadotte, well informed of the movement, wrote to the emperor at Warsaw: "Bennigsen's entire army is advancing; make haste, sire, we must stop it by a battle." January 22nd the emperor left Warsaw in ten degrees of frost. The emperor's march was brilliant; General Bennigsen having advanced too far, Napoleon, in his turn, turned him by a left flank movement. General Bennigsen ordered a retreat.

Skirmishes continued until the two enemies had taken up their position at Eylau. Here lamentable and glorious funeral rites were enacted. Prussian Eylau is a large village with natural fortifications; it is situated in the

midst of fir woods — melancholy-looking trees which form a vast retreat in deserts of snow. A plateau dominates the village and defends the outlet of a wide plain; it was here that the Russians had taken up their positions. Quite close was a cemetery, of German aspect, with black crosses on tombstones engraved with armorial bearings; this cemetery was occupied by a portion of the Russian guard, living corpses, who were soon to enrich this earth and supply ample food to the tombs. Napoleon gave no respite: in the evening, the word of attack was given; the charge already resounded. As at Austerlitz, Marshal Soult commenced the action by striking the serried columns; at all costs this position must be taken. Napoleon had ordered it, and nobody resisted such an order. A struggle with fixed bayonets took place in the dark, and Eylau was occupied by the French in the midst of the artillery's resounding fire. On this dark and memorable night, Marshal Davout made a movement to attack the enemy on the left, and Ney supported him. As for the emperor, he was on the plateau of Eylau; the fires of the bivouac shone in the distance; huge fir logs had been thrown in the roaring flames, for the cold was bitter during the night in Poland.

The following day, the 8th of February, witnessed a great battle. As soon as day dawned, the Russians were deployed in close columns; their front was covered by a formidable artillery whose fire reached home. These masses of northern men were of splendid appearance, huge grenadiers, cavalry mounted upon beautiful Livonian horses, the artillery with its terrible fire — such troops would make a breach anywhere. Napoleon perceived the danger; he opposed these powerful columns by the two corps of Marshal Soult and Marshal Augereau; this deadly fire must be stopped at all cost; 60 pieces of artillery of the guard were placed in position; the danger must have been great indeed for the guard to open the battle.

The cemetery of Eylau became the centre of the battle, the dead in the tombs would soon give a cold embrace to other dead who were falling under the grape-shot; the sky was black, the snow fell so fast that the soldiers could hardly see a few paces in front of them. The artillery which broke through this gloom was like thunder during a storm. Gusts of icy wind drove the snow into the faces of the French and favoured the Russians. Augereau's corps went astray by a false movement and these old regiments were trampled under the feet of the Russian cavalry. The whole of Desjardins' division was slashed to pieces; the brave soldiers fell after a heroic defence. Of a company containing a hundred and twenty men, only five answered to the roll-call in the evening; Augereau received a shot in the face, and was carried off the battle-field seriously wounded.

This reverse was perceived by the emperor, it was time to strike one of those blows which change the fortune of a battle, and Napoleon knew how to improvise them; he said to Murat, "Charge that cavalry"; cuirassiers and carbineers pierced the Russian squares, but such was the passive strength of these soldiers — walls of iron — that after having given way before the cavalry, they reclosed their ranks as if the damaskeened blades had not opened them. These fine cuirassiers were rallied vigorously, nearly all the generals commanding them remained on the battle-field. For the first time perhaps a double charge was held, forward and backward; the cuirassiers were obliged to break the ranks to penetrate into the middle of the squares and to break them again to get out.

The Russians, emboldened by this splendid defence, took the offensive, and in their turn attacked the cemetery occupied by six battalions of the old guard; the emperor had placed himself on a cippus shaped like a column,

surmounted by a funereal urn, so as to watch the progress of the battle; the Russian columns deployed round the walls, a strong division was detached with fixed bayonets for the purpose of entering the cemetery. Napoleon, deeply agitated, drew his sword and ordered the service squadron, with a strong battalion of the old guard to support it, to charge this column. The issue of this mêlée was about to become terrible; the six battalions of the guards were already setting out under Napoleon's glowing eyes, when Murat arrived on the scene and charged the Russian infantry which was deploying under the right and left fire.

At midday the ultimate success of the battle was in peril: the emperor, his field-glasses turned towards the right, waited for Marshal Davout to extricate the army from so difficult a position; Davout had promised to arrive at eleven o'clock, but he had found himself face to face with picked brigades of the Russian army which had stopped him suddenly; he had been fighting for two hours. Augereau's defeat had left a Russian corps unemployed; full of victorious enthusiasm, Bennigsen sent it to charge Marshal Davout. Overwhelmed by numbers, the marshal retreated, his regiments were broken up, driven a league from the battle-field; he was met by the bayonets of the Prussian general Lestocq; the marshal was then obliged to concentrate his forces on the heights which dominate Eylau.

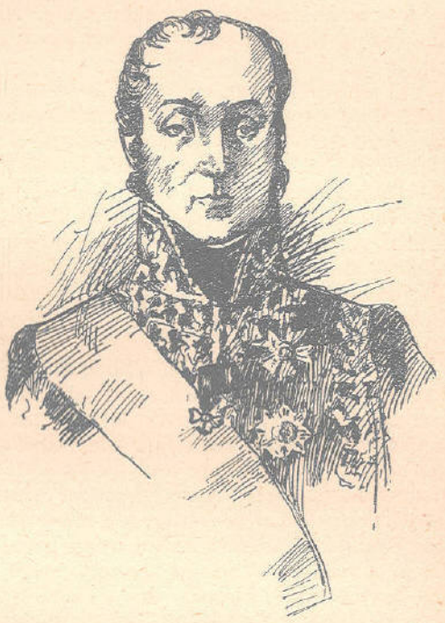
This was the state of affairs at four o'clock, when Ney, manœuvring at haphazard, arrived on the funereal field of Eylau; night was coming on, and only a few cannon-shots were heard between the two armies in the distance. All were exhausted after that day of slaughter; Ney's corps were not capable of charging, and blows were spontaneously stopped. Thus the armies ceased firing through sheer exhaustion. Napoleon and Bennigsen dated their despatches from the same field of carnage, to state that victory was equally divided. Eylau was a great slaughter, with no result whatever. Upon a narrow space of ground more than 30,000 men lay stretched on the battle-field; victory was gained by neither side. General Bennigsen was received with vigour and had attacked with boldness. What men! What troops! All day the cannon had fired within musket-shot, the discharges shook the ground, and this went on under heavy snow, in ten degrees of biting cold.

There was little strategy displayed in this battle: Napoleon had not shown his manœuvring genius; close attacks followed each other, man to man. The very reserve squadron was obliged to fight; Napoleon took his sword at the head of his old grenadiers of the guard; bullets rained around him, grape-shot thinned the ranks; if the Russian column which was bearing down upon the cemetery had not been stopped by the movement of the old guard and by Murat's charge, the fate of the emperor himself would have been compromised.

The next day the sun had hardly risen, red and cloudy, when the emperor visited the battle-field of Eylau. Napoleon was there, thoughtful and dejected, on a war-horse, with difficulty picking a way through the corpses; the field was covered with snow, reddened by long streams of blood for about a league and a half; here and there fir trees with their black leaves rose like sepulchral urns; then clouds of ravens alighted on the corpse-strewn earth with joyful croaking.

The aspect of that field of carnage was a sufficient proof of an encounter between picked troops; entire ranks, fallen under fire, lay there with the same firmness of bearing as if they were still fighting erect. There was something both grand and horrible in the appearance of that plain of Eylau.

What men! what gladiators had fallen in the circus proclaiming Cæsar's glory! Napoleon never forgot that spectacle; and in his despatch he described vividly the aspect of the plain of Eylau. He then added the following cruel but artistic phrase to his despatch: "All this stood out in relief on a background of snow." It required familiarity with such a spectacle and a hard heart to be able to send an artistic description of this desperate battle of Eylau, where seven generals were killed at the head of their glorious procession of proud soldiers. Since the battle of Novi, no such desperate battle had been fought with such ruthless and indomitable courage.



NICHOLAS CHARLES OUDINOT
(1767–1847)

For this reason the battle of Eylau was not forgotten, and left an ineffaceable impression of sorrow on the army. Russians and French returned of their own accord to their winter quarters, thoroughly worn out and exhausted. On either side the army was in a deplorable state of disorganisation; entire corps had disappeared; the four divisions commanded by General Augereau could not, when united, form a brigade; in some companies of light infantry and grenadiers, out of a hundred men, eighty-five had been killed; all these details were known in Warsaw and Paris; in Warsaw where M. de Talleyrand still held his diplomatic court, a partisan of peace, he was deeply affected by the deplorable turn the campaign was taking; he believed in Napoleon's genius, but he could not disguise the danger of his position on the banks of the Vistula 400 leagues from his frontier, face to face with Russia.[h]

THE BATTLE OF FRIEDLAND (JUNE 14TH, 1807)

The Russians had not yielded their ground on the day of battle; but they had been dreadfully cut up, with no succour to expect, while Bernadotte's fresh division was still behind Napoleon's. Bennigsen, therefore, retreated on the following day. The emperor had contemplated making the same movement; but on the disappearance of the Russians, he remained at Eylau an entire week, and then retired to occupy with his army the line of the river Passarge, his headquarters being established at Osterode. Here he despatched a messenger with offers of peace to the king of Prussia; whilst, on the other hand, he took measures for reducing Dantzic, for calling up reinforcements and supplies for his army.

The tidings that a battle of doubtful success had been fought towards the extremities of Prussia filled the Parisians with alarm. The funds experienced a considerable fall. So miraculous indeed had been the good

fortune of Napoleon, that people looked to its breaking like a spell, and considered reverses as probable. The same feeling prevailed in the army; and more than one general counselled a retreat behind the Vistula, all looking with a distaste little short of presentiment to prosecuting war in such distant and inhospitable regions. Napoleon, however, persisted in remaining on the Passarge, where he tarried until the month of May, when Dantzic surrendered to General Lefebvre, giving its name to its captor, henceforward called the duke of Dantzic. Reinforcements had reached both armies. Bennigsen commenced the summer campaign by attempting to force his way over the Passarge on the 5th of June. He was worsted on one point by Bernadotte, who was wounded in the head.

The French then became aggressors in turn, and drove the Russians behind the Alle. After an action at Heilsberg, both armies marched northwards, the Russians on the east side, the French on the west side of the Alle. It became necessary for the former, however, to pass the river, as they wished to preserve Königsberg, and at Friedland was the bridge and road which led thither. The French had but one division, that of Ney, immediately opposite to Friedland. Bennigsen pushed over forces to attack it. Napoleon was at Eylau; he hurried, however, to Friedland with the rest of his army.[g]

It was the 14th of June, the anniversary of the battle of Marengo; and, as is well known, Napoleon loved to celebrate such anniversaries by fresh victories, so that his army and the nations might see in him the man elect. But it is difficult to explain why he was so slow, on that day, in opening the attack. As at Marengo, he allowed himself to be forestalled by the movement of the enemy. The day before, his army had crossed the Alle and taken Friedland. The corps which occupied it was driven out in the evening; this slight success excited Bennigsen and rendered him less circumspect than usual. He, in his turn, did not fear to cross this river which supported his defence; a terrible mistake which placed him in a most dangerous position, however it might succeed; for the emperor, who had not foreseen this movement, had remained at his headquarters at Eylau, eight leagues from the battle-field.

Lannes and Oudinot, who were to bear the entire brunt of the exertions of Bennigsen's army, could not understand the emperor's delay. The latter did not hurry, so improbable did it appear to him that Bennigsen, ready to engage in a decisive battle, would place the river at his back. All the morning, Lannes and Oudinot, with prodigious exertions, kept at bay an army which they estimated at eighty thousand men; and Bennigsen was discouraged at the failure of his efforts. It was only at one o'clock in the afternoon that Napoleon arrived on the battle-field.

The victory for Bonaparte always dated from the moment the enemy committed a mistake; it was the triumphant glance of a clever player at a game of chess. "I can hardly believe my eyes and your reports," he said to his generals; "what! — Bennigsen, crossing the Alle, has fallen into that trap? We shall see how he is going to extricate himself." "It is perfectly true," answered General Oudinot, "and if my grenadiers were not exhausted, I should already have made them take a bath in the river."

Napoleon dictated his plan of battle under the double inspiration of the spot and the faults of the enemy. He traced it with the same precision with which he would presently see it carried into execution. It was a fine monument of military skill, fit to adorn works of instruction upon military art; then, in place of those fine and fiery proclamations by which he often

prepared and began his victories, he summoned his generals around him. He spoke to each such words as reward and redouble heroism.

Three great generals, Soult, Davout, and Murat, were on the Königsberg road. Napoleon had, in the first instance, intended to order them to rejoin him, but it meant postponing a battle whose success appeared to him assured. It would mean the loss of a marvellous opportunity given by fortune, or rather by Bennigsen's imprudence. The victory would be more sudden and more glorious, if perhaps less decisive. At five in the evening, Ney opened the battle with an impetuosity which remained unabated throughout. He reached the gates of Friedland; his vigorous attack was seconded by Lannes, Oudinot, and Victor. The Russian imperial guard hastened to defend Friedland; for a moment they forced two of Marshal Ney's divisions to give way, but Dupont's division sustained the shock without wavering and soon drove them back into Friedland, where the Russians were crowded together, obstructed the ways, and were unable to manœuvre. They allowed themselves to be exterminated with their usual patience, whilst continuing their vigorous fire. Bennigsen recognised that it was now time to make use of the three bridges he had thrown across the Alle to save his artillery, which was in danger. He succeeded to a certain extent; but the troops who were fighting in front of that river, which proved so fatal to them, remained exposed to all the fire and steel of the French army. Some had the good fortune to find a ford which facilitated their retreat; others, rather than surrender, threw themselves into the water. A great number were drowned. Ney at last reaped the reward of his stubborn exertions; he entered Friedland with Dupont and ended the battle he had so gloriously begun.

CLAUDE PERRIN VICTOR
(1766–1841)

Nightfall, fatigue, and great losses prevented a vigorous pursuit. However, the Russian army, weakened, it was said, by the loss of twenty thousand men, met with other obstacles in its retreat on the Niemen. Murat, guided by the roar of the cannon, had set out to harass the retreat of that army, whilst Soult captured another spoil of the battle at Königsberg where the enemy had left valuable stores. To expect further battles after such butcheries would have been inhuman. If this slaughter went on the two empires were threatened with the prospect of leaving all their population fit for war on these awful battle-fields and in these relentless climates. Friedland, without doubt, was a victory in every way, but one of those victories which tell the victor to proceed no farther. Prussia, abandoned by her defenders, seemed to be blotted from the political map of Europe.[i]

At the earliest opportunity Napoleon issued a proclamation to his army. "In ten days' campaign," said he, "you have taken 120 pieces of cannon, killed, wounded, or taken prisoners 60,000 Russians, and Königsberg has surrendered. . . . From the bank of the Vistula you have flown to the Niemen with the rapidity of eagles. Soldiers, you are worthy of yourselves and of me." The battle of Friedland closed the campaign.[a]

THE PEACE OF TILSIT

As soon as Alexander beheld the French upon the Niemen, and Russian Poland about to be invaded, he determined to ask for peace, "in order," says Buturlin[j] the historian, "to gain the time necessary for preparing to maintain the struggle, which, as was well known, would one day be renewed."

The two emperors agreed to meet and the first interview took place upon a raft built in the middle of the river (June 25th). "I detest the English," said Alexander, embracing Napoleon, "as much as you do, and I will uphold you in anything you attempt against them."[1] "In that case," Napoleon replied, "peace is concluded."

The two sovereigns took up their abode in Tilsit, admitted the king of Prussia to their conferences, and treated each other with marks of the liveliest affection for twenty days. Napoleon felt flattered at being acknowledged by the most powerful monarch in Europe. Alexander, who to great duplicity added a chivalrous exaltation carried to the extreme of mysticism, believed he was participating in the glory of the "man of the century, and of history." As for the king of Prussia, he was disregarded by the two newly made friends, and already saw himself sacrificed; in vain did the queen come in person to beseech the conqueror, who had insulted her in his bulletins, and to soften him used all the charms of her beauty and wit; Napoleon was insensible to the point of harshness. The war with Prussia had been a war of passion, and the treaty which ended it was a passionate one.[k]

There is much inexplicable in the French emperor's severe treatment of Prussia, contrasted as it is with his lenience and respect towards Austria. The latter had been at the head of three coalitions against France; the former, after one brief expedition, had remained neutral, and by so doing had procured the ascendency of France; yet, when at last driven to resist, she is punished more than the inveterate and unflinching enemy. Bignon,[l] as we have seen, attributes this to Napoleon's having at first set his heart on an intimate alliance with Prussia, and to his having been disappointed in this object. The reason is not sufficient. Bonaparte had warred as a general against Austria; in that inferior grade he could not but respect an illustrious enemy; and this early impression he never altogether shook off. But Prussia was the enemy of Napoleon, of the emperor, who had condescended to personal vituperation, and who scribbled against Frederick, his queen, and court, in the *Moniteur*.

The reason given by Bignon was, however, to a certain degree influential. The French sovereign had need of one ally amongst the three great powers of the north and east; he could afford to be friendly and merciful to that one. He first looked to Austria, which, having no seaports, could

[1 The English ministry then in power, the successors of Fox, had departed from the Pitt system of subsidising largely, and the Russian monarch thought it fit and just to execrate Great Britain for not paying him to defend himself. The sentiment, however, was eminently calculated to conciliate the conqueror.[g] Of Fox, the Baron de Norvins[d] said, "Fox has carried to the tomb with him every hope of the world's peace."]

not support him against England, and indeed would not. He then turned towards Prussia, whose mean and vacillating policy disgusted and alienated both him and Great Britain. Now he flung himself into the arms of Russia; anon we shall find him recurring to Austria again.

The terms now granted to the king of Prussia were stated publicly to be concessions made to Alexander, rather than to Frederick. They deprived him of all his territories westward of the Elbe, Magdeburg included; whilst on the east, he was curtailed of his acquisitions from Poland, which were erected into an independent state, to be called the duchy of Warsaw. Dantzic was also declared a free town; free, however, after Napoleon's fashion, with a garrison of French troops. The king of Prussia by this treaty lost upwards of four millions of subjects, preserving not more than five millions. Yet even what was preserved was not generously ceded. By an unworthy chicane, Bonaparte refused to evacuate the country till the arrear of contributions was paid; and this he estimated at an extravagant sum, triple of what his own intendants reckoned. Under colour of this, French garrisons were kept in the towns of Küstrin, Stettin, and Glogau. The duchy of Warsaw, with the shadow of a constitution, was given to the new king of Saxony, and Prussia was to allow their monarch communication between his two states by a military road across Silesia. Moreover, Prussia was bound to adopt the continental system, and shut her ports against the English. This, indeed, Bonaparte enforced, commanding the course of the Oder by Stettin, that of the Elbe by Hamburg. The queen of Prussia begged in vain for Magdeburg.

Prussia, as well as Russia, acknowledged the right and titles of Joseph Bonaparte, king of Naples and Sicily—Alexander thus abandoning the Italian Bourbons, whom he had so long protected. At the same time Louis Bonaparte was recognised king of Holland, and Jerome king of Westphalia. This last sovereign was to hold his court at Cassel, the old capital of Hesse, and was to include in his dominions the old territories of Brunswick, part of Prussia west of the Elbe, and part of Hanover. The principal stipulations at Tilsit were between Napoleon and Alexander, lords of the Old World, the one from the Atlantic to the Niemen, the other from the Niemen to the Pacific. They had enormous interests to discuss. Alexander had not hitherto raised himself above the moderate and traditional ideas of European courts. Coming in contact with Napoleon, whose mind embraced the globe, and teemed with gigantic projects, the Russian emperor was infected and caught with the high ambition which he found so eloquent, and saw so successful, in his great rival. Napoleon was to subdue the west of Europe, of which Spain alone remained to subdue, and Austria, perhaps, to humble somewhat more; whilst Alexander was to crush Sweden on one side of her, Turkey on the other. Sweden deserved, indeed, the enmity of France; but to plot against Spain, which had sacrificed its navy to Napoleon, and whose army was at this very moment in his service in the north, was atrocious. We must defer notice of this perfidy. That towards Turkey was equally unjustifiable. That court had every cause of resentment against France. Nevertheless, on the instance of Sébastiani, she quarrelled with her allies, England and Russia, and exposed herself to the peril of their hostilities. It was at this moment, in this critical situation, that France abandoned her to Russia.

These stipulations, avowed or secret, of the Treaty of Tilsit, were nothing less than a league to enchain the world. They actually annihilated Prussia, Alexander's late ally; they menaced Spain and Sweden with the same

imminent fate, Turkey and Austria prospectively. England was of course devoted to ruin. History may add the striking moral that it was here, in this very league of perfidy, that Bonaparte laid the trap into which he himself inextricably fell.[g]

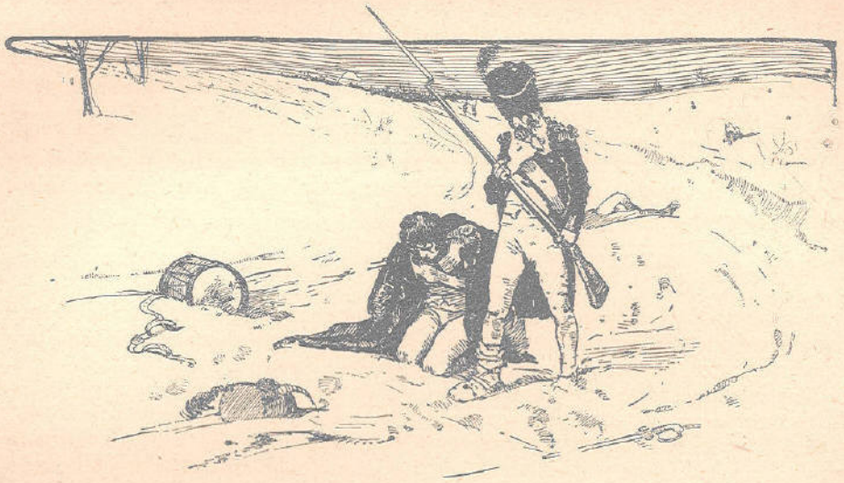
THIERS' COMMENT ON THE PEACE OF TILSIT

Napoleon now returned into France, where he was impatiently awaited and which had been deprived of his presence for nearly a year. Never had such matchless splendour surrounded the person and name of Napoleon, never such apparent omnipotence been acquired to his imperial sceptre. From the straits of Gibraltar to the Vistula, from the mountains of Bohemia to the German Ocean, from the Alps to the Adriatic Sea, he ruled either directly or indirectly, either by himself or by princes who were, some his creatures, others his dependants. Beyond this vast circuit were allies or subjugated enemies, England alone excepted. Thus almost the entire continent was held by him; for Russia, after having resisted him a moment, had adopted all his designs with eager warmth, and Austria found herself constrained to allow their accomplishment and was threatened with compulsory co-operation in them. England, in fine, protected by the sea from this universal domination, was to be placed between the alternative of peace or war with the world. Such were the outward aspects of this colossal power — well calculated in truth to dazzle the universe, as it effectually did; but the reality was less solid than corresponded to its brilliancy.

In the intoxication produced by the prodigious campaign of 1805 to change arbitrarily the face of Europe; and instead of being content to modify the past, which is the greatest triumph accorded to the manipulation of man, resolving to destroy it; instead of continuing the old and beneficial rivalry between Prussia and Austria by advantages granted to one over the other, to tear the German sceptre from Austria without giving it to Prussia; to convert their mutual antagonism into a common hatred against France; to create under the title of "confederation of the Rhine" a pretended French-Germany, composed of French princes, objects of antipathy to their subjects, and German princes ungrateful for all the benefits they received; and after rendering, by this inequitable displacement of the limit of the Rhine, war with Prussia inevitable, a war as impolitic as it was glorious, to give way to the torrent of victory and be carried to the banks of the Vistula there attempting the reconstruction of Poland with Prussia in the rear vanquished but quivering with anger and Austria sternly implacable — all this, admirable as a military exploit, was in its political bearings imprudent, excessive, and chimerical!

By the aid of his surpassing genius Napoleon maintained himself in these perilous extremities, triumphed over all the obstacles of distance, climate, mud, and cold, and consummated on the Niemen the subjugation of the continental powers. But at bottom he was solicitous to bring his audacious march to an end, and all his conduct at Tilsit bore the impress of this exigency. Having forever alienated the good will of Prussia, which he had not the fortunate inspiration to retrieve forever by a striking act of generosity, enlightened touching the sentiments of Austria, and experiencing, all-victorious as he was, the necessity of forming an alliance, he accepted that of Russia which offered at the moment and devised a new political system founded on a single principle — the concurrence of the Russian and French ambitions to do what they liked in the world: a fatal understanding, for it behoved France to keep a curb on Russia and much more to keep a curb on herself. After aggravating through this Treaty of Tilsit the rankling animosity of Germany by creating within it a French royalty, destined to cost France in the waste of men and money, in invincible hatreds to surmount and in unheeded counsels, all that hitherto those of Naples and Holland had cost her; after reconstituting Prussia fractionally instead of restoring or demolishing her bodily; after in like manner reconstituting Poland by a half creation — and all finished in an incomplete manner because at so great a distance time pressed and strength began to dwindle, Napoleon gave himself irreconcilable enemies and powerless or doubtful friends; in a word, reared an immense edifice, an edifice in which all was new from the base to the summit, an edifice constructed so rapidly that the foundations had not time to settle nor the cement to harden.

But if so much censure may be heaped in our opinion upon the political work of Tilsit, however brilliant it may appear, all is found admirable on the contrary in the retrospect of military operations. This army of the camp of Boulogne — which moving from the shore of the Channel to the sources of the Danube with an incredible rapidity enveloped the Austrians at Ulm, repulsed the Russians on Vienna, accomplished the annihilation of both at Austerlitz, and after reposing a few months in Franconia soon recommenced its victorious march, entered Saxony, surprised the Prussian army in retreat, crushed it by a single blow at Jena, pursued it without intermission, outflanked it, outstripped it, and took it to the last man on the extreme edge of the Baltic — this army turning from the north to the east hastened to encounter the Russians, hurled them back on the Pregel, paused only because impracticable quagmires impeded its movements, and then presented the wondrous spectacle of a French army tranquilly encamped on the Vistula. Being suddenly disturbed amidst its quarters it subsequently emerged from them to punish the Russians, reached them at Eylau, waged with them, although perishing of hunger and cold, a sanguinary battle, returned after that battle into its quarters, and there again encamped on the snow, in such a manner that its repose alone covered a great siege, being supported and recruited during a long winter at distances in which all the efforts of administration usually fail; resumed its arms in the spring; and now nature seconding genius interposed between the Russians and their base of operation, reduced them with the view of regaining Königsberg to cross a river before it, precipitated them into it at Friedland and thus terminated by an immortal victory on the banks of the Niemen its far protracted and audacious course — not across a defenceless Persia or India like the army of Alexander of Macedon, but across Europe covered with soldiers as disciplined as brave. Behold what is unexampled in the history of ages, worthy the eternal admiration of mankind, showing in combination all qualities of human mind, promptitude and procrastination, audacity and prudence, the science of battle and the art of marches, the genius of war and the tact of administration, and these virtues so various, so rarely united, always appropriately developed and at the moment when they were needed to insure success! The reader will ask how it came to pass that so much prudence was manifested in war and so little in policy. And the reply will be easy; it is that Napoleon directed war with his genius and policy with his passions.[m]



CHAPTER XX

THE RUSSIAN DISASTER

[1807–1810 A.D.]

> Like the giant of fable who piles mountains one on top of another, Napoleon had heaped victory on victory. His military glory surpassed all glories. The inebriate public believed in the grand alliance which crowned all these triumphs and was going, they said, to impose peace upon the world and wring from humbled England the liberty of the seas.
>
> This colossal and splendid edifice was built upon the sand.
>
> — HENRI MARTIN.[b]

FROM the events of Napoleon's reign one consolatory reflection, at least, can be drawn — the impossibility of lasting conquests and extended empire in the present stage of civilisation. So strong has grown the force of public opinion, even in the most despotic states, that any great, inhuman, and effectual system of oppression, such as that which founded conquest in the Middle Ages, has become impracticable. Less than this is inefficient for conquest. Napoleon conquered Austria and Prussia. Why did he not dethrone their monarchs and place himself or his vicegerent, in their stead? Because he durst not excite the whole population to arms against him. His talk, therefore, at St. Helena, of forbearance is wild and unfounded. Had he dethroned the king of Prussia altogether, his armies could not have existed on the Oder and the Niemen, except continually fighting, continually reinforced; and sources of recruiting were already beginning to fail. Napoleon did all that he durst in the way of usurpation. North Italy, indeed, weary of the Austrian yoke, underwent the French yoke readily, as did the southern part of the peninsula when gratified with a local king. In the smaller states on the other side of the Rhine, and within a march of the French frontier, he was able to adopt the same plan. Jerome

[1807 A.D.]

reigned in Westphalia, Louis in Holland. With the old kingdoms of Germany he dared not attempt it. The feats of divers insurgent parties, such as that under the brave Schill, taught him what was to be expected from such an attempt. His own regrets, therefore, and those of his partisans, that he did not crush altogether the house of Brandenburg, are idle. He acted unwisely, putting justice and generosity out of the question, in oppressing Frederick; he would have acted madly in dethroning him. Spain offers itself a pregnant example.

ENGLISH POLICY VS. FRENCH

Napoleon far overpassed the limits of vengeance and retaliation, which the independence, the honour, or security of France demanded; pursuing selfish schemes, unhailed as uncalled for by the nation, or even by its soldiers. In English policy, on the contrary, however the honest selfishness of patriotism may be apparent, that of the individual at least is never perceived; whilst France, also, set the example in that contempt for neutral rights in which England came to participate. But saying thus much against France, we cannot but allow England's own nautical maxims to be violent and arbitrary. The custom of anticipating a declaration of war by the seizure of ships which had entered English ports in peace, is in itself barbarous and unjust. As the war advanced, the English maxim of blockade became more strict. Engaged in a deadly struggle with a power that knew no tie or restraint, the English ministry soon unfettered itself equally, and committed acts which naught but the imperious necessity of national defence, could excuse. An expediency became sufficient to cover, with the house of commons, some of the grossest acts of injustice. One step of the kind led to another. The attack on the Spanish galleons, ere peace was broken, was an egregious outrage. And now necessity came to prompt one still more flagrant.

Denmark was situated somewhat as Holland had been — unable to resist or withhold its resources from France. To seize the Danish fleet was the order of the British commander. It was demanded, indeed, as a deposit during the war, to be restored at the conclusion of peace. But an independent sovereign could not listen to such conditions; and, melancholy to relate, Copenhagen was laid in ashes by the British, in order to compel their acceptance.

This of course closed the ports of Denmark henceforth against England. It gave Russia also ample pretext to proclaim its adoption of the continental system, already acceded to in secret. And now it may be said that the whole civilised world was engaged in war with the solitary islands of Britain. America was hostile from north to south. Russia, Austria, Prussia, France, Italy, and Spain, were in arms against her. Even Turkey, the "ancient ally," was ingrate, and — except Sweden, ruled by the feeble hand of a maniac, about to let go his sceptre, and Portugal — all Europe was hostile ground. British commodities were still landed in the Tagus, from whence they were circulated through the peninsula. In order to stop this last source of gain, as he imagined, to English merchants, Napoleon turned his forces to the peninsula. Thus the conferences of Tilsit did not even interrupt the struggle between France and Britain, but merely changed its scene from north to south. In July, 1807, the treaty was signed. In September, Copenhagen was bombarded. In October, Junot marched with an army from Bayonne against Portugal.

French historians agree in allowing that Bonaparte was now in the zenith of his glory. Victorious on every side, no power seemed capable of withstanding him for an instant upon land. England, on the contrary, was low as misfortune could reduce her, but still unabashed in spirit. In 1807, however, the public opinion of Europe was completely turned even against her probity, by the affair of Copenhagen. It cast a dark shade over the justice of her cause; and Napoleon had the advantage in fair character, until he meddled with the peninsula, and showed himself equally rapacious to the Spanish as individually selfish to the French, sacrificing the resources of his country to the elevation of his own family. Hence his decline may be dated. The hour of his highest triumph was signalised by a final blow given to the principles of the Revolution. A shadow of liberty still existed in the tribunate: Napoleon now suppressed it. A vestige of equality still remained; his dukes and princes forming an aristocracy, indeed, but not an hereditary one. The descent of titles and honours was now established by decree; and, as usual, the last measure excited most reprobation. He reimbursed the country not only with glory, but by salutary institutions. The code completed the Revolution in one of its most important aims, that of simplifying law.

Of the organic laws of Napoleon, the most useful to him was the conscription. This true source of his despotism he derived from the republic. It placed the whole youth of the country at his disposal. They were raised without cost, and supported by the contributions of the conquered countries. Up to 1805, no very immediate use was made of this power. According to Foy,[c] but seven in the hundred of the population were called each year to arms. But from that epoch the conscription knew no limits. Under one pretext or another, the entire generation, not only of youth, but of manhood, were transported to the armies. There was no longer a fixed term of service. "Natural death to a Frenchman became that found on the field of battle. Napoleon went so far, at last, as to demand 1,100,000 soldiers in one year, and that, too, from a population already exhausted by 3,000 combats." According to General Foy, the emperor supported, towards the end of the year 1807, upwards of 600,000 soldiers, besides the military forces of his allies.

NAPOLEON IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

The sovereign of this tremendous force, master of one-half of Europe, and aided by the rest, now turned his attention to the apparently diminutive object of excluding English cottons from the Tagus. An army of nearly 30,000 men marched, under Junot, to Lisbon to effect this. It was necessary to pass through Spain. Charles IV, king of Spain, was governed by his queen, who was governed in turn by her favourite, Manuel de Godoy.[1]

Junot continued his march towards Lisbon, and at the advance of the French army the Portuguese court was thrown into agonies of terror and irresolution. It determined to close all ports against the English, but the concession was of no avail. A few weeks later (November 30th, 1807) Junot entered Lisbon with his advance-guard. But the house of Braganza had ceased to reign; the royal family had embarked on board their own and the British fleet, and set sail for the Brazils, and Junot was only just in time to fire a few cannon-shots at the last ships of the fleet. Napoleon had now

[1 For the details of the elaborate plots, battles, and insurrections, of the Peninsular affair, as for the later Peninsular War, in which the duke of Wellington engaged, the reader is referred to the volume on Spain and Portugal. The story will be merely outlined here.]

realised his expectations with regard to Portugal, but there still remained Spain. And all the unoccupied forces of France were secretly poured into that devoted country. Charles IV and his son Ferdinand, prince of Asturias, were plotting and counter-plotting one against the other, both craving the friendship of Napoleon. He gave both parties promises of protection, and meanwhile seized the forts of Barcelona. This opened the eyes of Charles and even of Godoy. A few months before they had plotted with Napoleon for the overthrow of the house of Braganza. They had fled, and the same fate now seemed to await Charles. Preparations were made to retire to Cadiz but the populace stopped the royal carriages and prevented the flight. Charles was made to abdicate, Ferdinand was proclaimed king in his stead, and Godoy nearly fell a victim to popular vengeance. But this arrangement did not suit Napoleon and on the 6th of May the prince was made to yield back to Charles the crown that he had assumed on the 19th of March, 1808. Napoleon summoned 150 Spanish nobles to assemble at Bayonne. They met in June, and they were then informed that Joseph Bonaparte was to be king of Spain. Louis having refused the post, Joseph Bonaparte's place on the throne of Naples was given to Murat.[d]

This crime,[1] as clumsy as it was monstrous, brought on that great popular insurrection of Europe against the universal monarchy which has profoundly modified all subsequent history, and makes the anti-Napoleonic Revolution an event of the same order as the French Revolution. A rising unparalleled for its suddenness and sublime spontaneousness took place throughout Spain, and speedily found a response in Germany. A new impulse was given, out of which grew the great nationality movement of the nineteenth century.

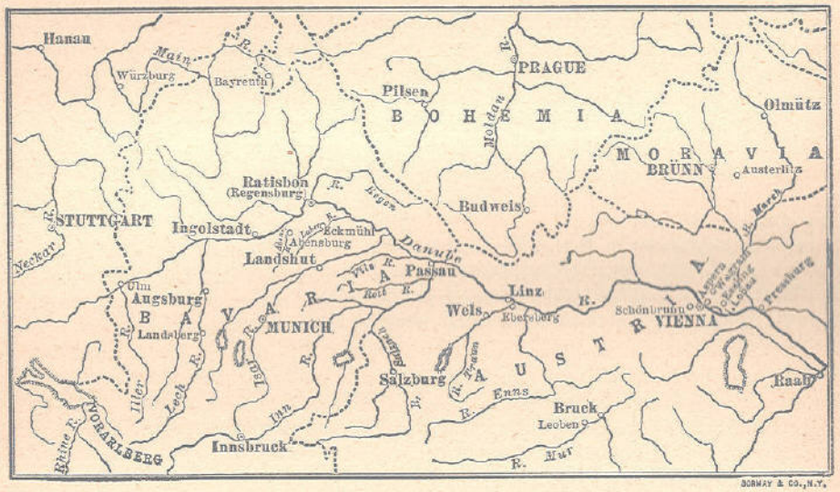
Instead of gaining Spain he had in fact lost it; for hitherto he had been master of its resources without trouble, but to support Joseph he was obliged in this same year to invade Spain in person with not less than 180,000 men. With Spain too he lost Portugal, which in June followed the Spanish example of insurrection, and had Spain henceforth for an ally, and not for an enemy. Hitherto he had had no conception of any kind of war not strictly professional. He had known popular risings in Italy, La Vendée, and Egypt, but had never found it at all difficult to crush them. The determined insurrection of a whole nation of 11,000,000 was a new experience to him. How serious it might be he learned as early as July when Dupont with 20,000 men surrendered at Baylen in Andalusia to the Spanish general Castaños. In August he might wake to another miscalculation of which he had been guilty. An English army landed in Portugal, defeated Junot at Vimeiro, and forced him to sign the convention of Cintra. By this he evacuated Portugal, in which country the insurrection had already left him much isolated. This occurrence brought to light a capital feature of the insurrection of the peninsula, *viz.*, that it was in free communication everywhere with the power and resources of England. Thus the monarchy of Tilsit suffered within a year the most terrible rebuff.[e]

Whilst Bonaparte was completing this act of Machiavellianism, his brother of the north was accomplishing his balance of usurpation. Finland was invaded by the Russian armies in February (1808); and on the very day that the Spanish king was forced to sign away his rights at Bayonne, the ancient province of Sweden was annexed to Russia.

[1 Napoleon himself called it his "tragedy of Bayonne," and said at St. Helena "that cursed war destroyed me: it divided my forces, opened a wing to the English soldiers, and attacked my moral standing in Europe."]

A NEW WAR WITH AUSTRIA (1809 A.D.)

The court of Vienna also began to display signs of returning spirit. She armed, increased her regular force, and organised a militia. Napoleon, in the month of August, took the opportunity of a public levee to reproach Metternich, the Austrian envoy. But tidings of the Spanish resistance and of English successes in Portugal gave hardihood to German independence. Napoleon resolved at once to menace and insult Austria. He had a meeting, September 27th, 1808, with the emperor of Russia at Erfurt, in Germany, where, as at Tilsit, the great European interests were of course discussed, and Austria excluded as a secondary power. The sovereigns of the confederation of the Rhine all appeared at Erfurt paying court to Napoleon, who, thus acting Charlemagne, quite usurped the place of the modern cæsars. Her pride being thus trampled on afresh, Austria determined, though alone, although even opposed by Russia, once more to renew the struggle with France.



MAP ILLUSTRATING NAPOLEON'S CAMPAIGN OF 1809

Amidst the few civil occurrences drowned in the tumult of arms, a circumstance indicative of Napoleon's ideas of government occurred in the pages of the *Moniteur*. In November, the legislative body thought fit to present their congratulations to the empress Josephine on a victory in Spain, near Burgos. She thanked them, and assured them of the emperor's respect towards the "representatives of the nation." The journals repeated the expression: it reached Napoleon in his camp; and an immediate note transmitted to the *Moniteur* informed the French public of their master's code of government, and at the same time betrayed a symptom of ill humour towards Josephine:

> As to the legislative body representing the nation, her majesty the empress could not have uttered any such words: she knows too well our institutions; she is aware that the only representative of the nation is the emperor. In the time of the convention France had a representative assembly; and all our misfortunes have proceeded from this exaggeration of ideas. It is at once chimerical and criminal in any to pretend to represent the nation before the emperor.

Such was the language held to the French public in eight years after the fall of the republic. Let it, however, not be supposed that the French received such affronts in apathy: on the contrary, the enthusiasm for Napoleon now died away; and even his ardent followers allow that success survived his popularity, the latter languishing since the epoch of Tilsit. The first hostilities of Austria excited neither astonishment nor resentment in Paris. The French, themselves oppressed, began to consider their foes as fellow-victims. The car of Juggernaut, however, once put in motion, is not to be stopped even by those who first impelled it. Austria armed: Napoleon called for fresh conscriptions; his guard was recalled from the pursuit of the English, to combat the Austrians on the Danube. War seemed interminable; the prophecy of Talleyrand was fast realising itself.

The court of Vienna had made most incredible exertions: an army of nearly 200,000 men, commanded by the archduke Charles, menaced both France and Italy; another army in Galicia opposed whatever forces the emperor Alexander might think himself called upon to send in order to support his ally. Austria determined to crush her enemy by the magnitude of her exertions. In her first campaign against France, in concert with the duke of Brunswick, she had equipped but a wretched army of 40,000 men; yet then 100,000 would have decided the question. England made precisely the same blunder. Both countries were now compelled to keep 500,000 men each in pay, in order to compete with their giant antagonist.

On the 10th of May, 1809, the archduke passed the Inn. Napoleon had hurried from Paris on the first tidings; he met the king of Bavaria at Dillingen, whither he had fled from his capital. Bonaparte had scarcely a French soldier with him: he put himself at the head of the Bavarians and men of Würtemberg, visited their lines and bivouacs, addressed them, and stirred them to emulate French valour. His efforts were successful: on the 20th of May, whilst Davout advanced from Ratisbon, Napoleon attacked, at the head of the German troops, and defeated the Austrians at Abensberg. Davout being almost between them and the archduke's main body, at Eckmühl, the routed wing was obliged to retreat in another direction, to Landshut, where it was forced to surrender on the morrow. It was in these first moments of rencontre that Napoleon so happily knew how to seize an advantage.

From the field of Abensberg, Davout had been ordered to advance straight towards the archduke Charles at Eckmühl, whilst Napoleon followed the routed Austrian wing to Landshut. The latter foresaw that the archduke would direct his forces against Davout. He did so; but whilst in the act of attacking, the portion of the army under Napoleon came from Landshut, on the left flank of the Austrians, who were totally unprepared, and who thought Napoleon far away; the consequence was a complete victory. The archduke made the best retreat possible to Ratisbon: there crossed the Danube to join the Austrian corps on the side of Bohemia, and left the right bank, together with Bavaria, free.

Thus, after the campaign of a week, in which two actions and divers combats had been fought, the French emperor was enabled to send forth one of his astounding proclamations. "An hundred pieces of cannon, 50,000 prisoners, forty stand of colours:" so great already was the amount of his trophies; and these were achieved principally by Germans, by the soldiers of Bavaria and Würtemberg. The general here made the army. Davout was created prince of Eckmühl on the field of battle. Napoleon on this occasion received a contusion on the right foot from a spent ball. "That must have been a Tyrolese," said he, "by his long aim."

The archduke Charles having crossed the Danube at Ratisbon, retreated into Bohemia, no doubt desiring to draw the French after in pursuit. Napoleon preferred marching on the right bank to Vienna. A respectable force under General von Hiller alone opposed him here, and took its stand in a strong position at Ebelsberg near Linz. Masséna, eager to rival Davout's recent glory, attacked it, and Ebelsberg was also marked with French victory. Towards the close of the combat the town was set on fire, and all the wounded burned to death. "Figure to yourself," says an eye-witness, "all these dead baked by the fire, trodden under the feet of the cavalry and the wheels of the artillery, all forming a mass of mud, which, as it was removed by shovels, emitting an indescribable odour of burned human flesh, caused a sensation, horrible even amongst the every-day horrors of war." In passing Coehorn's Corsican regiment, that had headed the column of attack, the emperor inquired respecting its loss, which had been about one-half of its number. "We have just one more charge left," replied the officer, pointing to the surviving half of his battalion.

Precisely in a month after the Austrians had commenced the war, by passing the Inn on the 10th of May, Napoleon was at the gates of Vienna. The archduke Maximilian refused to surrender; the French accordingly occupied the suburbs, and mortars being placed near the beautiful promenade of the Prater, the bombardment began. A flag of truce soon appeared; but it was merely to mention that the archduchess Marie Louise, confined by indisposition, had been left behind in the imperial palace. Napoleon immediately ordered the guns to play in another direction, thus sparing unconsciously his future empress. On the 12th Vienna capitulated, and received the French troops on the following day.

The favourite triumph of Napoleon was to date some startling order from the conquered capital of an enemy. He now sent forth from his imperial camp at Vienna a decree, setting forth that "Charlemagne, emperor of the French, our august predecessor, bestowed upon the bishops of Rome divers countries, not in property, but as a fief, to be held upon certain spiritual services; but by no means intending that these territories should cease to make part of his empire." The conclusion from these logical premises was the annexation of Rome and its territories to the French empire; the pope being allowed still to remain there as bishop, with a revenue of two millions of francs.

NAPOLEON DEFEATED AT ESSLING [1]

The archduke Charles had in the meantime reached, by a circuitous march through Bohemia, the bank of the Danube opposite Vienna. More wary than in 1805, the Austrians had destroyed every bridge over the river, whilst it became indispensable for the French to cross it, and put an end to the war by a victory, ere insurrection or diversions could be formed in their rear, — ere the want of subsistence or accident should compel them to retreat. There were no materials for forming a bridge; and, instead of anchors for attaching the boats, the French were obliged to make use of Austrian cannon. On the 21st of May, Napoleon passed with the greater part of his forces to the left bank of the Danube, occupying the two villages of Gross-Aspern and Essling, but not without considerable loss from the artillery of the enemy.

By the morning of the 22nd, about 40,000 French were on the left bank, and against them the archduke marched with all his forces. Masséna was

[1 This is also called the battle of Marchfeld or of Gross-Aspern.]

intrusted with the defence of Gross-Aspern, Lannes with that of Essling. The Austrians penetrated into the village, where the French still preserved their position, and every house and wall became a fortress and entrenchment, attacked and defended with obstinate valour. As the combat slackened on the part of the Austrians, towards Essling, Napoleon advanced into the plain, brought forward his cavalry, and menaced the centre of the enemy. The archduke Charles flew instantly to the threatened point, rallied in person his faltering troops, and seizing a standard with his own hands, led them back to the charge. The French were repulsed; and at the same time a want of ammunition made itself felt, the stores being still on the island. At this critical moment the bridge was carried away, either by the stream, or by the impediments which had been purposely sent down the river. The tidings of this accident, which cut off all hopes of reinforcement, produced an involuntary movement of retreat towards the bridge, which the workmen hastened to refit. As the French in their retreat converged to the one point, the bridge, the enemy's cannon made dreadful slaughter amongst them.

Essling was taken, but retaken by Mouton, now count de Lobau. To keep possession of it was absolutely requisite to protect the retreat. Lannes quitted his horse to command the defence, and he held out while the cavalry was crossing the temporarily refitted bridge. A cannon-shot carried off his legs. General Saint-Hilaire was slain. But the French were enabled to retreat from the left bank back into the island of Lobau. Thither Bonaparte had retired. Thither the shattered Lannes was borne. This brave man now bewailed his fate, cast imprecations on the surgeons who could not save him, and invoked Napoleon as a deity to grant him life. Lannes regretted the glories and triumphs of life, more than he feared death. Napoleon was greatly moved.

The French had been beaten, certainly by forces vastly superior. The loss was enormous: Bonaparte sat between Berthier and Masséna, on the brink of the river in the island, contemplating the broken bridge; his army shut upon the island of Lobau, separated too widely from Davout and from succour, too narrowly from the foe. All counselled a retreat to the left bank, which could only be done by abandoning artillery, horses, and wounded. This was acknowledging defeat. The emperor knew the dreadful consequences of this. "You may as well bid me retire to Strasburg at once," said he. "No; Vienna is now my capital; the centre of my resources. I will not abandon it, nor retreat." The troops in the isle were, in consequence of this giant resolve, ordered to hold their ground.

The news of the French defeat immediately spread, and insurrection began to menace. That of the Tyrol against the Bavarians was most serious. These brave mountaineers surpassed the inveterate Spaniards in hardihood, and no efforts or force could subdue them. Napoleon pressed the arrival of aid from Italy, from Dalmatia, and from Saxony.

THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM (JULY 6TH, 1809)

The emperor had fortified his position in the island of Lobau, and busied himself with preparing another bridge. The archduke Charles still occupied the opposite bank, but remained tranquil, satisfied with having repulsed the French. His brother, Prince John, was recalled from Italy, and was closely pursued by Eugène Beauharnais, who defeated him at Raab. Bonaparte chose the moment when he was joined by Eugène, and before the

archduke Charles could be joined by his brother, to pass the Danube once more to the attack.

On the 4th of July, the French, reinforced by the Saxons, the army of Eugène, and that of Marmont from Dalmatia, were concentrated in the island of Lobau, to the number of 150,000. There was scarcely room for the troops to repose. Napoleon ordered the original bridge opposite Essling to be repaired, as if he intended to cross by its means. This was but to deceive the Austrians. In the night three more bridges, ready prepared, were fixed lower down, and the French army crossed on the night of the 4th and the morning of the 5th. The archduke instantly found his batteries and preparations idle. Instead of fronting the Danube, he was obliged to extend his line perpendicular to it, from behind Gross-Aspern to Wagram, and from thence behind a little river on his left. The 5th was spent in manœuvring and cannonade, the Austrians retiring from Essling. Towards evening Bonaparte wished to dislodge them from their commanding position at Wagram, but his troops were beaten back and routed. Both armies slept on the field, the French without a fire, Napoleon in a chair.

PRINCE EUGÈNE BEAUHARNAIS
(1781-1824)

On the morning of the 6th commenced the famous battle of Wagram. The Austrian centre was on the high ground near that village. Davout, on the right, was able to resist. But on Masséna's side the battle seemed lost. That general, from the effects of a fall, was in a carriage, not on horseback; his troops, unanimated by his presence, shrunk from the enemy, whose cannon enfiladed the line. For a long time Napoleon was in doubt, riding on a white charger in the midst of this raking fire, which Savary*f* calls "a hail-storm of bullets." At length he resolved to allow his wings to resist as they might, and to fling all his disposable force upon the Austrian centre at Wagram. He sent Lauriston against it with 100 cannon, the infantry under Macdonald, Bessières supporting both with the cavalry of the guard. Macdonald's charging columns arrived just as the artillery of Lauriston had made large breaches in the Austrian bodies. The French rushed into the gaps. A diversion from the extreme right aided them, and the centre, at Wagram, was driven in, routed, and the wings abandoned. It was then an easy task to take in flank the corps already victorious over Masséna.

In short, the several portions of the Austrian army fled from the field in disorder, separated from one another. The French, however, had suffered too much to follow them. The guard did not charge with their wonted alacrity. Masséna's hurt, Lannes' loss, Bessière's accident, had each an untoward effect at Wagram. Napoleon sought to replace Lannes by Macdonald, whom he created marshal on the field of battle.[1] The Saxons, under

[1] Oudinot and Marmont also were created marshals after Wagram.

THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM
(From the painting by Chartier)

Bernadotte, had not shown any excess of courage in the action; still their commander, in a bulletin, attributed to them a great share in the success. Napoleon was so discontented with this, that he deprived Bernadotte of the command; an additional cause of quarrel between them.

Wagram was a victory, but it was not a victory like Marengo or Austerlitz. The hostile army was defeated, but neither destroyed nor intercepted. The archduke Charles, formidable in force, and still more in military talents, had withdrawn into Moravia, awaited the army of his brother, and might have prolonged the campaign. Napoleon deemed it prudent to make peace. An armistice was concluded about the middle of July. Napoleon took up his quarters at Schönbrunn, an imperial palace near Vienna, where he was at hand to control the course of the negotiation that ensued.[d]

RUPTURE WITH THE POPE (APRIL 2ND, 1808)

It was on the question of the continental blockade that the contest with Pius VII began. The pope intended to remain neutral, but as a temporal prince he could not evade the measures imposed on all the continental powers. He wanted to, nevertheless; moreover, he refused to recognise Joseph as king of Naples, and he steadfastly opposed the policy of France in Italy. Napoleon had not expected this resistance; tired out with a war of diplomatic negotiation, threatened with excommunication, he caused Rome to be occupied on April 2nd, 1808. But this capital which was so easy to take could be guarded only with great inconvenience, and this old man who had neither a soldier nor a cannon was more difficult to conquer than the innumerable troops of Austria. The sword of the conqueror was to be blunted against this intangible power which commanded consciences rather than armies. It was in vain that Napoleon had declared the temporal dominion of the pope suppressed after Wagram, made Rome and its territory into two French departments, and kept the pontiff in honourable captivity at Savona; he found himself weakened by these extreme measures because from that time a redoubtable opposition was formed against him in the ranks of the French clergy and Catholics. The great services he had rendered the church, the re-established altars, the restored cult, France brought again by him into Catholic unity, all was forgotten; only the persecutor of the pontiff was seen in the author of the concordat.[1] In signing this famous document the first consul had said: "The clergy is a force; I wish to seize it." He did not know that that force never allows itself to be held. At the end of a few years, it had turned against him.[e] The pope made the resistance that became his station, and assumed the character of a suffering martyr. Miracles were said to be worked by his voice. "Thus the year 1809," says Norvins,[f] "seemed to belong more to the Middle Ages than to the nineteenth century. It presented nothing but war, violence, excommunication, miracles, peasant insurrections, captivity, and treason, the oppression of the strong, the rebellion of the weak."

There had been some fighting in Westphalia, against insurgents. The gallant Schill had fallen. Hofer, more successful in the Tyrol, beat back the French under Lefebvre, and refused to acknowledge the armistice.

[1] At Savona the pope refused to act in any manner, Napoleon nominated 27 bishops which the chapters refused to receive. He suppressed certain festivals, closed convents, demanded an oath of canons and curés. Over two hundred refused and were exiled. Napoleon sequestrated church property estimated at 250,000,000 francs and entered them in the state treasury at 150,000,000.[f]

Towards Warsaw, Austria had had the better of Napoleon's allies, the Poles under Poniatowski. An expedition from England, under Lord Chatham, at the same time sailed to the Schelde; but, instead of boldly aiming at Antwerp, it began with Walcheren and Flushing, and turned every way to the triumph of Napoleon. One circumstance connected with it nevertheless stirred his temper. Fouché had summoned the national guards of the northern departments to defend Antwerp. He gave the command to Bernadotte, but lately dismissed from the army at Vienna. In an address to his new army, the latter, an awkward courtier, bade it show that "the presence of the emperor was not indispensable to victory." The first act of Napoleon on learning this, was to dismiss Bernadotte from his command; and Fouché shared his friend's disgrace.

Conferences for peace continued between Napoleon at Schönbrunn, and the Austrian court then established in Hungary. There was no submissiveness on the part of the conquered. The power of Napoleon was in fact shaken. His army was no longer invincible. The day of Essling counterbalanced that of Marengo, and the emperor Francis felt that whatever might be the aspect of the present, the future was more threatening for his foe than for him. Napoleon made much the same reflections; even in his proudest day he acknowledged the necessity of having one great and cordial ally. Alexander had not proved such. He had played the lukewarm, temporising friend; and Napoleon recoiled from his alliance. The apparently indomitable power of Russia it was, that gave Austria confidence. To make himself master of Europe, Napoleon saw now that Russia must be humbled. What alliance and cajolery could not effect, victory should. Such were Napoleon's views at Schönbrunn; and, with these, to join with Austria, and make her rather than Russia his intimate, became his policy. It was requisite not to betray it; therefore, chaffering and bargaining were continued, and negotiations were drawn out. The apparent articles of the final treaty were the cession of Salzburg and other territories of the Rhenish confederation, that of Trieste and some adjacent lands to France, Cracow, and part of the Austrian spoil of Poland were given to the duchy of Warsaw; another small portion of it to Russia: adroit conditions, calculated to set Austria more at variance with the latter country. Napoleon affected to grant these moderate terms to the conquered, out of deference to Russia; on the contrary, they sprang out of pure enmity.

The memoir-writers of the day imagine that an attempt or plan made to assassinate the French emperor had the effect of inclining him to peace. A young German named Staps, the son of a Protestant clergyman, was seized in the attempt to approach him. A large knife was found in his breast; he avowed and gloried in the purpose. Bonaparte offered him pardon if he would profess contrition. The stubborn enthusiast scorned even these terms, and perished. Napoleon, it is said, immediately after this event, relaxed in the severity of his conditions, and peace was concluded; but it is more than probable that he wished to keep secret, from even his own negotiators, his new views respecting Russia, and that he seized on a pretext to fulfil a previous determination. Napoleon had tried every means hitherto, except that of justice and forbearance, to attach to his alliance one of the great powers of Europe. Prussia, Austria, Russia, all had proved insincere, naturally enough, because ill-treated. But Bonaparte, with the self-partiality of his country, did not see the outrageousness and injustice of his own ambition: nevertheless, as this alliance was necessary, he resolved to recur to the old cement of European monarchies, *viz.*, marriage.[d]

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S ACCOUNT OF THE DIVORCE OF JOSEPHINE (1809 A.D.)

There is perhaps no part of the varied life of the wonderful person of whom we treat, more deeply interesting, than the change which took place in his domestic establishment, shortly after the Peace of Vienna.

It was impossible that the founder of so vast an empire as that of Napoleon, could be insensible to a feeling which is so deeply grafted in our nature, as to influence the most petty proprietor of a house and a few acres — it is of a character to be felt in proportion to the extent of the inheritance; and so viewed, there never existed in the world before, and, it is devoutly to be hoped will never be again permitted by providence to arise, a power so extensive, so formidable as Napoleon's. Immense as it was, it had been, moreover, the work of his own talents; and, therefore, he must have anticipated with the greater pain, that the system perfected by so much labour and blood, should fall to pieces on the death of him by whom it had been erected, or that the reins of empire should be grasped after that event "by some unlineal hand."

EUGÉNIE HORTENSE DE BEAUHARNAIS (1783–1837)

The sterility of the empress Josephine was now rendered, by the course of nature, an irremediable evil, over which she mourned in hopeless distress.

She turned her thoughts to seek a remedy, and exerted her influence over her husband, to induce him to declare someone his successor, according to the unlimited powers vested in him by the imperial constitution. In the selection, she naturally endeavoured to direct his choice towards his stepson, Eugène Beauharnais, her own son by her first marriage; but this did not meet Bonaparte's approbation. A child, the son of his brother Louis, by Hortense Beauharnais, which appeared, during its brief existence, more likely to become the destined heir of this immense inheritance, died of a disorder incident to childhood; and thus was broken, while yet a twig, the shoot, that, growing to maturity, might have been reckoned on as the stay of an empire. Napoleon showed the deepest grief, but Josephine sorrowed as one who had no hope.

As age advanced every year weakened the influence of the empress. By the time of the meeting with the czar at Erfurt, September 27th, 1808, divorce seems to have been a matter determined, since the subject of a match betwixt Bonaparte and one of the archduchesses, the possibility of which had been anticipated as far back as the Treaty of Tilsit, was resumed, seriously treated of, and if not received with cordiality by the imperial family of Russia, was equally far from being finally rejected. It seems probable that the

idea of substituting an archduchess of Austria was started in the course of the Treaty of Schönbrunn, and had its effects in providing lenient terms for the weaker party. Napoleon himself says, that he renounced his purpose of dismembering Austria when his marriage was fixed upon.

Upon the 3rd of December, 1809, Bonaparte attended the solemn service of *Te Deum* for his victories. From the cathedral Napoleon passed to the opening of the legislative body, and boasted, in the oration he addressed to them, of the victories which he had achieved, and the trophies which he had acquired. He alluded to the obstacles which he had surmounted, and concluded, "I and my family will always know how to sacrifice our most tender affections to the interests and welfare of the great nation." These concluding words, the meaning of which was already guessed by all who belonged to the court, were soon no riddle to the public in general. Two days afterwards, Napoleon made Josephine acquainted with the cruel certainty, that the separation was ultimately determined upon. She fell into a long and profound swoon. Napoleon was much affected, but his resolution could not be altered.

On the 15th of December, Napoleon and Josephine appeared in presence of the full imperial council. In this assembly, Napoleon stated the deep national interest which required that he should have successors of his own body, the heirs of his love for his people, to occupy the throne on which providence had placed him. Josephine arose, and with a faltering voice, and eyes suffused with tears, expressed in a few words sentiments similar to those of her husband. The imperial pair then demanded from the archchancellor a written instrument in evidence of their mutual desire of separation; and it was granted accordingly, in all due form, with the authority of the council.

The senate was next assembled; and on the 16th of December, pronounced a consultum, or decree, authorising the separation and assuring to Josephine a dowry of two millions of francs and the rank of empress during her life. Addresses were voted to both the imperial parties, in which all possible changes were rung on the duty of subjecting our dearest affections to the public good; and the conduct of Bonaparte in exchanging his old consort for a young one, was proclaimed a sacrifice for which the eternal love of the French people could alone console his heart. The union of Napoleon and Josephine being thus abrogated by the supreme civil power, it only remained to procure the intervention of the spiritual authorities. The diocesan of the officiality, or ecclesiastical court of Paris, did not hesitate to declare the marriage dissolved. Josephine took up her residence in the beautiful villa of Malmaison, near St. Germain. Here she principally dwelt for the remaining years of her life, which were just prolonged to see the first fall of her husband. Napoleon visited her very frequently, and always treated her with the respect to which she was entitled. He added also to her dowry a third million of francs, that she might feel no inconvenience from the habits of expense to which it was her foible to be addicted.

NAPOLEON REMARRIES

Eugène, the son of the repudiated Josephine, was now commissioned by the council to propose to the Austrian ambassador a match between Napoleon and the archduchess Marie Louise. Prince Schwarzenberg had his instructions on the subject; so that the match was proposed, discussed, and decided in the council, and afterwards adjusted between plenipotentiaries on

either side in the space of twenty-four hours.[1] The espousals of Napoleon and Marie Louise were celebrated at Vienna the 11th of March, 1810. The person of Bonaparte was represented by his favourite Berthier, while the archduke Charles assisted at the ceremony, in the name of the emperor Francis. A few days afterwards, the youthful bride, accompanied by the queen of Naples, proceeded towards France.

With good taste, Napoleon dispensed with the ceremonies used in the reception of Marie Antoinette, whose marriage with Louis XVI, though never named or alluded to, was in other respects the model of the present solemnity. Near Soissons, a single horseman, no way distinguished by dress, rode past the carriage in which the young empress was seated, and had the boldness to return, as if to reconnoitre more closely. The carriage stopped, the door was opened, and Napoleon, breaking through all the tediousness of ceremony, introduced himself to his bride, and came with her to Soissons. The marriage ceremony was performed at Paris by Bonaparte's uncle, the cardinal Fesch. The most splendid rejoicings, illuminations, concerts, festivals, took place upon this important occasion. But a great calamity occurred, which threw a shade over these demonstrations of joy. Prince Schwarzenberg had given a distinguished ball on the occasion, when unhappily the dancing-room, which was temporary, and erected in the garden, caught fire; several persons perished. This tragic circumstance struck a damp on the public mind, and was considered as a bad omen, especially when it was remembered that the marriage of Louis XVI with a former princess of Austria had been signalised by a similar disaster.[h]

MARIE LOUISE
(1791–1847)

THE CONTINENTAL BLOCKADE AND ANNEXATION OF HOLLAND (1809–1810 A.D.)

What was the real situation of the French Empire and of Europe after the peace with Austria and the marriage of Napoleon?

[1] There is one fact which we think should not be omitted, because, though of trifling importance in itself, it shows what pains Napoleon was at to give predominance to the French nationality. He was just as anxious to assert the superiority of his language as of the empire. It was an ancient custom in Austria to draw up all documents concerning the royal family in Latin. All the world knows how hard and fast are such legal rules; but they were compelled to yield to a stronger power. Napoleon insisted that the acts relative to his marriage, which were to be signed in Vienna, should be written in the language of that imperial house of which the young archduchess was about to become a member, of that nation in which she was henceforth to dwell. The emperor Francis consented to this, but on condition that the exception should form no precedent. — BIGNON.[i]]

In spite of the terrible political blunder of the war with Spain, Napoleon, thanks to his military genius, had nevertheless triumphed over the diversion which the English had aroused against him in Austria. The coolness caused between France and Russia by the Austrian marriage by no means made a new war inevitable with the emperor Alexander, who did not wish it. Napoleon thus found himself confronted only by England and the Spanish insurrection. If he concentrated the immense forces he had at his disposal against these two enemies, there was no doubt that he would succeed in driving the English out of Portugal, and that he would eventually break the resistance of Spain or at least reduce it to a petty partisan warfare which would extinguish itself little by little. Austerlitz had killed Pitt; Wagram, if Napoleon knew how to profit by it, would kill the successors of Pitt. What Napoleon ought to do was evident to all. We shall see what he did.

Napoleon continued to press heavily only on Prussia and on the Hanseatic towns. Ruined as it was, Prussia was behindhand in the payment of heavy war taxes, which she had promised. Napoleon took advantage of this delay to keep his garrisons in the strongholds of the Oder and at Dantzig. As for the Hanseatic towns, Hamburg, Bremen, Lübeck, Emden, he continued to occupy them also in order to force them to observe the continental blockade, which drove them to despair. England succeeded in evading this blockade by a vast and skilful contraband organisation. Neutral ships, reduced to engaging in contraband trade or else giving up all commerce, were obliged to come to her ports to get provisions and to pay high duties to the English. Some of these ships then unloaded the English merchandise by night on points along the coast where receivers came to get it; others entered into the ports of the French allies and even into French ports, denying that they had had any communication with the English and pretending that they were bringing colonial produce from the proper sources. Most of these contraband ships were American or Greek, subject to the Ottoman Empire, which made immense profits by thus acting as intermediaries for the English.

The government of the United States was not their accomplice. Irritated at the violence committed at will by the emperor of the French and by the English government, it had forbidden its subjects to trade with Europe, and the American contrabands thus stood without the pale of their own law. Napoleon caused all the American and Greco-Turkish boats in French ports to be seized and derived great profit from their rich cargoes. He urged his allies to do the same in their own ports. He found with all of them a very lively resistance to this radical and decisive measure, and nowhere was the opposition more decided than in a country from which he had expected passive obedience—in the kingdom of his brother Louis, in Holland.

Napoleon made such oppressive demands from the states which were in fact French vassals, that his brothers and brothers-in-law whom he had made kings all tried to a greater or less degree to resist him in favour of their subjects. This opposition, however, was much more pronounced in the case of Louis, the king of Holland, because of his character and the situation of his people. He nourished towards his imperious brother depths of bitterness, which came from his unhappy marriage; and his upright and humane soul, his moral sense which distinguished him from all the Bonapartes, revolted against the thought of being an instrument of oppression towards the people over whom he had been placed to rule. The truth is that Holland was in a most deplorable state. Her commerce and marine were ruined, and all the sources of her ancient prosperity were exhausted. Napoleon had become supremely unpopular.

Napoleon wished to force Louis, not only to give up to him all the American ships found in the ports of Holland, but also to reduce the public debt of Holland by two-thirds — in other words to become bankrupt, so as to find money for the army and fleet which he demanded from Holland as her contingent. Louis came to Paris to try to move the emperor. Napoleon at first treated him very roughly and declared that he was resolved to ruin Holland for the sake of France. Louis refused to abdicate. Napoleon hesitated to employ force. The attempt at a negotiation proved abortive.

The marriage with Marie Louise took place soon after. Spring had come. People were waiting to see Napoleon start for Spain and direct a decisive campaign there. He did not start. He was too much occupied in perfecting the continental blockade and wished to watch over its being carried into effect on the shores of the North Sea, from close at hand. But above all, the real reason which kept him from returning to Spain was that no Austerlitz or Jena was possible there, no new thunder-clap which might increase the prestige of his glory. It was a war of patience, in which it was necessary to destroy, one at a time, insurgents difficult to seize, and to dislodge the English from their defensive positions in Portugal by forcing them to re-embark. His pride considered such operations beneath him. He sent Masséna.

Napoleon now exceeded the exorbitant conditions which he had imposed on Holland and caused his soldiers and custom officers to invade not only the borders but the whole of Holland. The French customs exercised an insupportable tyranny. When French troops approached Amsterdam Louis talked of opening the flood gates and of inundating the country, as in the war of 1672 against Louis XIV, and of calling on the English for assistance. The Dutch notables gathered about the king, themselves dissuaded him from an act of despair which would only have added to the miseries of their country. Louis abdicated in favour of his son, and left *incognito* to seek refuge in Germany. The place of his retreat was unknown for some time. The abdication of Louis did not save the nominal independence of Holland. Napoleon had already decided on uniting it to France and issued a decree to this effect (July 29th, 1810).

Napoleon ordained extensive operations of maritime construction at Rotterdam and at Amsterdam, and thus reanimated somewhat these two large cities, which were almost dead. Holland submitted to the annexation in silence. On the northeast France now exceeded the boundaries of ancient Gaul; it reached no longer to the frontier of the Rhine but to that of the Ems. It was felt that Napoleon would not halt there, that he would soon need all the coasts of the North Sea. A concession made to Dutch commerce in regard to the introduction of colonial produce was soon made general throughout the empire (August 5th, 1810). It was not possible in fact to suppress the contraband trade; the result was merely to make the contraband traders gain an enormous premium. Napoleon conceived the idea of getting this premium for himself by authorising everywhere the entrance of the colonial product in return for a tax of 50 per cent. payable in money, in bills of change, or in natural produce. At the same time that they admitted all the colonial produce they would confiscate and burn all merchandise of English manufacture, cotton goods, hardware, etc. This measure, very well conceived, and very adroit, was applied at once throughout the French Empire, and in all the countries neighbouring, or those occupied by French troops. Enormous masses of English merchandise were destroyed while quantities of colonial produce were spread through the

country and caused a fall in the exorbitant price of sugar, coffee, and a large number of consumable articles the lack of which had been cruel for the people. The French treasury gained 150,000,000 francs from the tax of 50 per cent., besides a large quantity of merchandise. England began to suffer greatly.

In respect to the United States, also, the situation was improving for France, and becoming worse for England. Napoleon had acted as skilfully there as in the affairs of the colonial produce. He had revoked the vexatious measures of the decisions of Berlin and Milan in regard to the Americans, and had given them full neutral rights on condition that they would impose respect for this neutrality on the English. The president of the United States announced by a proclamation that, if England had not revoked her paper blockade by February 2nd, 1811, America would re-establish her commercial relations with France and would rigorously interdict them with England. The Americans thus entered on a path which would lead them to war with the English.

The matter of the continental blockade progressed thus during the year 1810, and Napoleon began to obtain tangible results; but the solution depended chiefly on the war with Spain.[b]

AFFAIRS IN SWEDEN AND THE PENINSULA

A more important change took place in Sweden. The impolitic king of that country had been dethroned by his subjects, for compromising the integrity of the state, and sacrificing it to his enmity against France. The influential men of Sweden were compelled to look abroad to find the stock of another royal race, and preferred to choose one of Napoleon's generals, in order to acquire the favour of France, and to be secure from the encroachments of Russia. Singularly enough, their choice fell upon the only marshal between whom and the emperor there was a secret enmity. Bernadotte had commanded at Hamburg, and had displayed there his lenience and sense of justice. In the campaign of Prussia he had captured a Swedish division, treated and dismissed it with kindness. He was accordingly preferred, and prayed to accept the Swedish throne. Napoleon covertly opposed the election. Bernadotte, however, played his part at once with firmness and sagacity. He accepted the bright offer, and, wresting Napoleon's assent, departed to enter upon his rule; for, although but crown-prince, he was already called to exercise the functions of government.

In Spain, after the retreat of Wellington subsequent to the battle of Talavera, the French succeeded in defeating the regular forces of their adversaries. The south at length owned the rule of Joseph Bonaparte who, in the beginning of 1810, entered Seville. There now remained but to chase the British from Portugal. The enterprise appeared too trivial, as we have said, to demand the presence of Napoleon. Masséna was intrusted with the task, and given 80,000 men to execute it. Before such an army, Lord Wellington retired, but the impregnable lines of Torres Vedras brought him as much honour as his previous victories. He secured there the independence of Portugal.

The French, from the soldier to the general, were fighting in a cause and field that they disliked. Marmont succeeded Masséna; but not to repair his fortune or supply his talent. Soult, who loved war for war's sake, was the most formidable enemy; yet, in the sanguinary battle of Albuera, Beresford, with a few thousand British, wrested victory from his hands.

THE RUSSIAN QUARREL

We now approach the quarrel betwixt France and Russia; the last act—the grand *dénouement* of the drama. There is no lack of causes. Although the flexible mind of Alexander forgot, in his admiration for the conqueror of Friedland, those conditions of the Treaty of Tilsit that were imposed upon Russia, his aristocracy, his people, who were far from sharing their monarch's personal esteem for the French emperor, could not fail to remind him of their sentiments. At Tilsit much had been promised and held forth on the part of Napoleon to dazzle Alexander and to captivate his friendship.

No sooner, however, did he part from Alexander, than Bonaparte revised his thoughts, and altogether changed his views respecting Turkey. He would no longer listen to the prayer of Alexander's ambition on this head; and at Erfurt the Russian monarch was obliged to abandon the plan. This disappointed him, and proved the first cause of the rupture. It is also the cause most honourable to Napoleon, who dwells on it accordingly. At St. Helena, he asserts, that his resistance to Alexander's views upon Turkey was the origin of the quarrel; and Bignon[i] affirms the same thing.

"From the conference of 1807 at Tilsit," says that historian, "sprung the germ that was to be fatal to Napoleon. To force England to peace conformably to the alliance of Tilsit, Russia was to act against Sweden, France against Portugal; or, to translate more largely the ideas of the two emperors, Russia left Napoleon full liberty of action over the south of Europe, France abandoning to Alexander similar liberty in the north with respect to Sweden, moreover allowing him to have a certain degree of tolerance on the side of Turkey. In consequence of these reciprocal concessions, France found herself engaged in the horrible Spanish war; Russia in one of which the dangers were insignificant, the advantage being the acquisition of Finland. Napoleon then imagined that Finland might content Alexander; no such thing. For a moment Napoleon had admitted the possibility of partitioning the Ottoman Empire. This contingency Alexander assumed as a certainty. His constant demands were on the subject of the partition. But Napoleon ever refused, and for a double motive: the first political, because the lot of France, magnificent as it had appeared, was but a source of peril and embarrassment, whilst that of Russia had proved all substantial and positive value; the second military, in that he looked on the Turkish Empire as a marsh, which prevented Russia attacking him on his right. Hence the gradual coolness betwixt the two emperors."

What is chiefly evident from this is the complete Macchiavellianism of both parties; nothing like justice entering into the contemplation of either, except such justice as robbers may invoke in order to secure a fair division of the spoil. In these calculations of interest evaporated the imperial friendship, the solemn amity of Tilsit.

There were other griefs. Napoleon, in the campaign of Wagram, had perceived the lukewarmness of Russia. He had mentally abandoned the hopes of close alliance with that country. Austria became his friend, his ally, by marriage; and Russia was menaced by this very act. The duchy of Warsaw, the nucleus apparently destined to agglomerate into an independent kingdom of Poland, was swelled with part of Galicia, sufficient to make Russia tremble for Lithuania. Griefs continued to amass. Secretaries and envoys with hostile notes preluded to war.

Napoleon had determined on it: to humble Russia, and reduce it to that obsequiousness towards him that Prussia and Austria displayed, was the

requisite completion of his system. Without this, all the rest was insecure. To talk of Napoleon's injustice and ambition at this time was vain; his empire was built on the two words, and was to be completed by them. His policy was profound, well calculated; it was his task that was difficult. He played for the game of universal empire; he made a false move with respect to Spain. He was compelled to that of Russia, unavoidable in time; and that he would have willingly deferred, had it been possible without retracting. The preparations of Bonaparte were gigantic: he drew from the soil of France the last soldier that conscription allowed him.[d]

THE GRAND ARMY

The *grande armée* was composed of a first army corps of 96,000 men, increased to 140,000 by the division of Prussian auxiliary under Davout, with its headquarters at Hamburg; a second army corps of 40,000 under Oudinot at Münster; a third of 39,000 plus 9,000 cavalry under Ney at Mainz. A fourth army corps of Italians under Prince Eugène [de Beauharnais] was to collect in Bavaria; a fifth, the Polish army of 36,000 under Poniatowski at Warsaw; a sixth, formed of Bavarians and commanded by Gouvion-Saint-Cyr, had its centre at Bayreuth; a seventh, of Saxons to the number of 17,000 at Dresden, under Reynier; an eighth, of Westphalians, under King Jerome at Magdeburg. The reserve cavalry and the imperial guard under Mortier and Lefebvre counted 62,000 men. Finally came the sappers and miners, the train soldiers and a corps of pontoniers. The whole amounted to 423,000 men, not including the Austrian corps from Galicia.

After this army, composed of the best troops, Napoleon organised a reserve army of at least 130,000 men including two new army corps, the ninth and tenth, under Victor and Augereau, and a certain number of separate divisions. This second army was intended to support the first and to guard Germany; many recruits and foreigners, such as Germans and Danes, were put into it.

Then the enormous figure of 600,000 soldiers was reached and, adding to it the Spanish troops and those which were to remain in other parts of the empire, the fabulous figure of 1,100,000. Such was the force with which Napoleon boasted that he would oppose Europe. It is true that 150,000 men of the grand army alone were troublesome auxiliaries, if not secret enemies, embittered at heart and only awaiting a favourable opportunity to abandon the French.

In the meantime a distressing famine was raging in France. The preceding harvest had been poor, at least for grain, wheat rose to the excessive price of 70 francs a hectolitre. This unparalleled dearness caused disturbances in the large towns. Napoleon organised a *conseil des subsistances* and spoke of nothing less than of putting a tariff on grain and of doing violence to the farmers as in 1793. Cambacérès succeeded in dissuading him from it only in part. The emperor wished that bread should be kept at a low price in Paris, that the bakers should be indemnified from the treasury, and the farmers obliged to bring their grain to market, which threw trade into a state of perturbation. Beginning to dread the popular murmurs which were getting louder he went to St. Cloud to pass the weeks preceding his departure.

The levies of men were another cause for complaint. Napoleon decreed the levy of 120,000 national guards, at the rate of 30,000 for those released from each conscription of the last four years. He had imagined what he called "a military classification of the nation," divided into 3 *bans* which would serve, the first at the frontier, the second in the *département*, and the third in the *commune*. The council of state became alarmed at this indirect method of levying more soldiers. Napoleon persisted, saying that "he would thus have a nation built of lime and sand, capable of defying men and centuries." However, only a part of his project was put into execution and violent murmurs greeted this demand of "flesh for cannon." For a long time an opinion, which was only too well founded, had prevailed, that people who entered military service did not come out of it alive. Mutiny broke forth in the large towns, in the schools. The number of refractory persons, which the severity of prosecution had at first diminished, increased to an alarming degree. In the annexed territories the mutinies became riots. There were uprisals in Italy and in Holland, where the delinquents were fired upon. In the Hanseatic departments desertion took place in large numbers.

Napoleon without absolutely ignoring this state of mind disdained it, and saw in it only the more reason for pursuing the great success which in his opinion was to change the face of Europe. Only he omitted the convocation of the legislative body that year. He did not even address any official communication to the state bodies and contented himself with informing the senate before his departure of some of his last transactions.[j]

THE WAR WITH RUSSIA

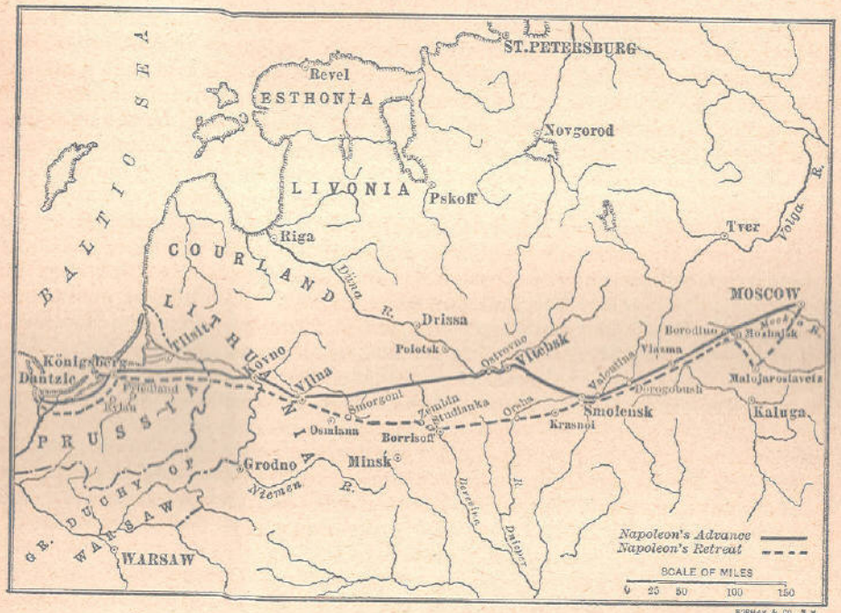
In front, Alexander saw all Europe armed against him — Poland the foremost, expecting her independence, and calling Lithuania, the spoil of Catherine, to join her. On each side were Sweden and Turkey: Russia, at war with the latter, had not long since robbed the former of a fine province. Yet both these precious allies France lost at this critical moment. The jealousy of Napoleon and Bernadotte alienated Sweden. The emperor, with his arrogant ideas, sought to reduce the sovereignty of his former lieutenant into vassalage. Bernadotte's language, as an independent monarch, was even more galling to the emperor than his acts. When he asked Norway as the price of his co-operation against Russia, Napoleon fell into a paroxysm of rage at the insolence of such a demand. Personal feelings smothered the suggestions of policy; and he ordered Pomerania, the only possession of Sweden on the continent, to be invaded. He thus flung the actual ruler of Sweden into the arms of Russia. Bonaparte's conduct with respect to Turkey was not more happy. British influence prevailed at Constantinople. Napoleon, in truth, began to be egregiously ill served, especially in the civil and diplomatic line. He mistrusted men of all schools — the ancient noblesse and the Jacobins alike. He owned at St. Helena that had he kept Talleyrand, the Russian war might have been avoided; he might have added, the Spanish war also.

After two years of prelude and preparation, with armies on either side of the Niemen, the rupture became imminent at the commencement of 1812. Napoleon left Paris on the 9th of May for Dresden. At this town he had given rendezvous to his allies; and never certainly did Europe see such a court: the emperor of Austria, the king of Prussia, were amongst those who waited on Napoleon. Kings and princes of inferior rank crowded his antechamber and saloons, and stooped before the mighty emperor of yesterday. Certes, here the French Revolution retaliated its vengeance on the pride that had scorned and endeavoured to crush it. Its representative trod beneath his feet all that was regal and illustrious in Europe. The reunion

of Dresden seemed a parting pageant, given to Napoleon by fortune ere she abandoned him. He quitted Dresden, and in a few days was in the midst of his army beyond the Vistula. It required all, and more than all, the energy and talent of Napoleon to feed this mass; and even if he possessed the means, it became evident that the mere distribution could not be always effected. Ere the army had marched fifty leagues into Russia, several of the very guards died of hunger. The old system of preying and living upon the enemy's country, was here, as in Spain, impossible.

NAPOLEON ENTERS RUSSIA (JUNE 24TH, 1812)

It was too late, however, for reflection. On the 24th of June, the French army crossed the frontier river Niemen. A solitary officer of Cossacks was



MAP ILLUSTRATING NAPOLEON'S RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN AND RETREAT

the only enemy that appeared to challenge them; but a tremendous thunderstorm burst forth over the French as they first trod the Russian soil. It appeared as if the elements promised to supply the weakness of the men of the north in defending their territory. The Russians did not even appear: their plan was to retreat, avoid a battle, still drawing the French far from support and resources, to fall on them at last, when winter, famine, and fatigue had daunted their confidence and diminished their strength. This is said to have been the plan of Barclay de Tolly, the Russian commander. Napoleon thus entered Vilna without a blow; and here was his last opportunity for declaring the ancient kingdom of Poland re-established.

Immediately before Napoleon, the Russians composed two armies: the greater one, under Barclay, had retired from Vilna to Drissa, on the river Düna [southern or western Dwina], where an entrenched camp defended

HUZUR POLITICAL OFFICE BARODA.

the road to St. Petersburg; the lesser, under Bagration, was at Grodno, and, by the French advance, had been separated from Barclay. This was a sad blunder on the part of the Russians; such a one that, had it been committed before Bonaparte commanding a small and manageable army, by a force of proportionate numbers, not one would have escaped: but, with the masses which he had now to move by word or writing, not by personal order, all depended upon lieutenants. Some were tardy, some inapt; others, active and skilful, had jealousies which paralysed them. It was thus that the French lost now the first opportunity which the chance of the war afforded, — that of cutting off Bagration, — by the differences betwixt Davout and Jerome Bonaparte, and the consequent inertness of both. Jerome was disgraced, and sent back to Westphalia; but this could not restore lost time: Bagration had made good his retreat.

Napoleon now moved with his main body from Vilna to the banks of the Düna, to occupy Vitebsk, on the Düna; Smolensk, where the Russian armies had united, was on the opposite side of the Dnieper. Napoleon tarried the two first weeks of August at Vitebsk. Such long delay, in such a man, is inconceivable; so much so, that some of his followers have attributed it to the decline of his health: but, in fact, he was overpowered by the enormity of affairs; the difficulties of moving and providing for his immense army, the disorder of which he saw, and vainly exerted himself to remedy. He now resembled the spirit of an eagle put to vivify and move the body of an elephant, forced to plod, when its nature was to fly. Emboldened by his inaction, the Russians at Smolensk prepared to brave him and beat up his quarters. Learning the Russian advance upon Vitebsk, he moved off his army from the Düna to the Dnieper, changing his whole line of operations, and braving the inconvenience of this for the sake of getting to Smolensk before the enemy and intercepting them. In this, too, he failed: the Russians retreated in time; whilst the troops covering Smolensk fought with that dogged indomitable courage which the French could not overcome. Their cavalry charged the Russian squares, entered them even; they slew, but could not rout. The Russians, in whatever confusion thrown, refused to fly; unlike the Austrians, who, "when turned," or spying an enemy even on their flank, thought themselves released from the task of resistance. But war with the Austrians had become a profession; with the Russians it was waged with national feeling and inveteracy.

Barclay, having succeeded in entering Smolensk before the enemy, resolved to defend it long enough to allow of a measured retreat. Napoleon's impatience impelled him to an assault; it was ordered. But the Russians, from behind their ancient walls, defied all the efforts of the French, and repulsed them with the slaughter of six thousand. The attack was given over. Napoleon pitched his tent before the town, when, at night-fall, the towers and buildings of Smolensk were seen in a flame. Barclay, in evacuating it, had set it on fire.[d]

Napoleon left his tent to contemplate the terrible spectacle; he bestrode a chair, according to his usual custom, leaning his head upon his hands; the glow of the fire was reflected in his pale and cadaverous features. No one slept that night, and the army remained under arms; a thousand fires illuminated the bayonets with a sinister gleam, all this made a fantastic and ominous picture. It was still dark, when a Polish division was the first to succeed in entering Smolensk; silence reigned on every side; not a soldier, not a single inhabitant to be seen; all had fled. Here was a new Necropolis, a new city of the dead, and when the army crossed the streets of

Smolensk amidst ringing strains, they found only skeletons, and ruins — not one single living creature. Indescribable sorrow filled every heart, and was portrayed on every visage; never, in any campaign, had the army experienced like consternation on the day it placed its eagles in a conquered capital.*k*

THE BATTLE OF BORODINO OR THE MOSKVA

Still, amidst these ruins, the emperor might have halted, strengthened his communications, brought up provisions and reinforcements, and organised his army. But to check his advance in the month of August, and within but eighty leagues of Moscow, was too much to expect of Napoleon's impatience. His generals, who looked on the conduct of the campaign merely in a military point of view, dissuaded with earnestness, that swelled to choler, all idea of further advance. Napoleon, who was not blind to their views, but who joined with them those of the statesman and the monarch, decided on penetrating to Moscow.

In search of an engagement, as well as of the capital, Napoleon held on his march. Nor was he wrong in his calculations. In obedience to the cry of the Russian army, Barclay was superseded by Kutusoff; and this general chose the place of his stand near Borodino, on the Moskva. The Russian retreat, even so far, was not such as gives courage to the pursuer. At Valoutina, not far from Smolensk, Barclay made a stand, in order to preserve some baggage and cannon, resolving to leave no trophies to the enemy; and Ney was severely repulsed. Junot, who should have taken the Russians in flank, hesitated on this occasion, and showed a want of courage;[1] and yet Junot was continued in the command of his division.

On the 5th of September the French came in view of their enemies, posted on heights extending southward from the village of Borodino. Each army was about 120,000 strong, so much had the French numbers dwindled: the Russians were perhaps more. The 6th of September was the day long sought by Napoleon. He was on horseback before daybreak, and saw the sun rise in splendour, like that of Austerlitz. Two fresh arrivals from Paris were announced: the one a chamberlain, with a portrait of the young king of Rome;[2] the other, Fabvier, with tidings of the loss of the battle of Salamanca by Marmont. Shaking off the ideas excited by both, Napoleon issued a short address: "Soldiers! here is the battle you have so much desired. Victory must depend on you. We need one, in order to have abundance, good quarters, and a speedy return to France. Conduct yourselves as at Austerlitz and Friedland. Let people say of each of you with pride — 'He was at that great battle in the plains of Moscow!'"

The French, as usual, had the disadvantage of attacking. The general of the attacking division, Compans, was wounded; Rapp, who succeeded him, was wounded also, and Davout himself hurt by the fall of his horse, which was killed under him. The attack on the right, in consequence, faltered; but victory came from the left, where Napoleon least expected it. The viceroy of Italy, Eugène Beauharnais, instead of holding back, according to his orders, pushed forward into Borodino, got possession of it, and, improving his advantage, dashed across the river, to the attack of the great

[1 According to Dareste, Junot was without orders and at too great a distance to be culpable. He calls this battle "one of the bloodiest battles of the empire," each side losing over 6,000 men.]

[2 Marie Louise had borne Napoleon a son March 20th, 1811, and he was given the title "King of Rome." "Napoleon had now," says Dareste, "a dynasty and a future. Providence seemed to consecrate his work."]

EVE OF THE BATTLE OF BORODINO

(From the painting by Lalauze)

[1812 A.D.]

redoubt. The column of Davout had, in the meantime, rallied; its second effort drove Bagration from his batteries. What Fain[l] calls a third battle was fought towards evening on the contested points. Finally, the Russians abandoned the field. It is said that, by ordering forward his guard, which he held in reserve, Bonaparte might have changed the Russian retreat into a rout, intercepted and cut up their army. But Bagration had shown the stubbornness of the Russians on such occasions; and Napoleon would not risk his guard, nor advance his reserve when the consequence was doubtful.[d]

"There is in the art of lying a degree to which not all nations can attain," says Capefigue[k]; "never could a general of old Europe, driven from his entrenchments and forced to retreat, have dared, when writing to this court, to proclaim himself victor. But Kutusoff, writing after the lost battle, did not hesitate to say that he had won it." In a transport of joy Alexander ordered *Te Deums* to be sung. He made Kutusoff a field-marshal and loaded him and his family with honours.

The losses of the two armies were great; those of the Russians, however, far exceeded those of the French.[1] Possibly the reverse might have been the case, if, after being compelled to evacuate their trenches, they had not returned to try and retake them. It was during this audacious undertaking that the masses of troops, motionless under the thunder of French artillery, experienced the most terrible losses. Of all the battles yet fought by Napoleon the battle of the Moskva was undoubtedly the most bloody. Among the others only two approach it in any degree in the magnificence of the sacrifices by which victory was bought—the battles of Eylau and Wagram. Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, were less costly and had better results.[i]

The battle was won, but dearly. Eight generals fell on the side of the French; the heroic Bagration killed, was a loss as severe to the Russians. The honour of the day fell to Ney. He was created prince of the Moskva, this river, which runs to Moscow, being a short space in the rear of the action; its name sounded better to fame than the Kalocza, on whose banks it was really fought. The night of victory was one of sadness to Napoleon. "Seven or eight hundred prisoners, and a score of broken cannon, were all his trophies won." The discouragement of his army was excessive. We believe, in opposition to Ségur,[m] that moral despondency, but too well founded, influenced his spirits, not that disease or corpulency benumbed his faculties [yet much might be said in favour of the opposite view].

MOSCOW TAKEN AND BURNED (SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1812)

Moscow, however, was won. Kutusoff reluctantly abandoned the hope of defending it. The governor, Rostoptchin, took his measures, if not for excluding the French, at least for rendering the possession useless to them. But Moscow remained, apparently in all its original splendour, when the French entered it on the 14th of September. Napoleon took up his residence at the Kremlin, the ancient palace of the czars. He was not long left in peaceable possession of it. From the first day of occupation, fire had appeared in different quarters. It was either neglected or renewed; but on the 17th the flames, fanned by a strong wind, spread rapidly, and showed themselves masters of the whole city. The Kremlin was surrounded by the fire, its windows burst with heat, and it required all the efforts of the guard to pre-

[1 Seeley[e] places the French loss at 30,000, the Russian at nearly 50,000. He accuses Napoleon of showing "unwonted indecision," which he justified by saying that "at 800 leagues from Paris, one must not risk one's last reserve."]

serve the quarters of Napoleon. At length, when a way was cleared for him through the burning city, he left it, and established himself at the country-house of Petrowskoie, not far from the gates of Moscow.[d]

On the first intelligence of this catastrophe the destruction of Moscow was attributed in Russia to the French themselves, and was not by any means regarded as a crushing blow dealt at Napoleon by Russian patriotism.

It is indeed not clear that this event had any decisive influence upon the result of the war. Nor does it seem to have been the deliberate work of the patriotism of Moscow. The beginner of it was one man, Count Rostoptchin, governor of Moscow, who is shown by many public utterances to have brooded for some time over the thought, and is proved to have made preparation for carrying it into effect before leaving the town.[1] It is, however, supposed that what was begun by him was completed by a rabble which had no object but plunder, and partly by French soldiers. The immediate effect of it was to deepen the alarm of the Russians, and, when this feeling passed away, to deepen their hatred of the French.[e]

The first object of the expedition over, and Moscow, or its ruins, in the power of the French, what was to be the next aim? Napoleon's instant conception was to march upon St. Petersburg, menace or cut off Wittgenstein, and be reinforced by the army of Macdonald. It was a giant resolve, and required giant efforts. It was the wisest, too, except that of immediate and direct retreat, which had many disadvantages. But, without the concurrence of his chiefs, such an enterprise was impossible. They counselled retiring by a new and circuitous road to the south. And betwixt both opinions, resolve rested in suspense, and neither was prosecuted: this was the most fatal step of all. The French remained at Moscow, waiting, like victims, for the winter to immolate them. A little more courage would have followed the emperor's idea; and if ever Alexander was to be brought to terms, it was by marching towards him. On the contrary, however, Napoleon sent Lauriston with proposals of peace, and vainly awaited in the Kremlin, which had been preserved from the fire, an answer never to return.

At length, after a month's lingering and debating and incertitude, Moscow was evacuated by the main body of the French on the 19th of October, a rearguard remaining with orders to blow up the Kremlin. The imperial wagons were laden with trophies, those of the army with spoil, and all the carriages and calèches of Moscow travelled with their captors. It seemed merely a return from a party of pleasure. A month was yet to elapse ere the middle of November, the general period for the frost's setting in. To arrive at Smolensk, and take up winter quarters before that time, seemed feasible and certain. The army of Kutusoff in the meantime, after evacuating Moscow, had turned, still within sight of the burning city, towards the south. Murat had followed it, but was defeated. Napoleon, on leaving Moscow, adopted the original plan proposed by his chief officers, to march first to the important town of Kaluga, and thence by a fresh unwasted road to Smolensk. The French numbered 100,000 men, almost all on foot; artillery and cavalry were without horses; and there was every prospect of being obliged to abandon some, if not the greater part, of the former.

THE GREAT RETREAT BEGINS

The chief motive for choosing this southern road was that it had not the appearance of retreat, so anxious was Napoleon to conceal his failure even

[1 This, however, was denied by Admiral Tchitschakoff.[2]]

from his own eyes. The Russian general reached Malojaroslavetz in time to oppose the French march. A sanguinary engagement took place between the advanced guard under Prince Eugène and the Russians October 24th; the village, taken and retaken seven times, at length was kept by the French.

The French army in three corps now turned their faces to France, and to Smolensk as the nearest rallying-place. They looked there for the support of Victor's fresh corps; but Victor was busied elsewhere. Wittgenstein, reinforced by the ever-swelling levies of Russia, had beaten Gouvion-Saint-Cyr on the Düna, and taken Vitebsk. This was cutting the retreat off from Vilna, and Tchitschakoff, commanding the army returned from the Turkish war, had received orders to advance from the south, and, by seizing Minsk, cut off the only other practicable road westward. Such were the tidings that saluted Napoleon on his entry into Smolensk. The viceroy Eugène and Ney each led a corps in the rear of Napoleon, and were dreadfully harassed by the Russians, who, now driving their enemies before them, felt the spirit of success animating their previous stubbornness. Not only pursuing, but often anticipating the march of the foe, they hung upon his rear and flank, delayed his flight, by forcing him to turn and fight, whilst clouds of Cossacks swept away the stragglers, or deferring to slay, from a savage spirit of amusement, drove the famished wretches before their spear points as a pastime.[1]

Winter, too, set in, — that dreaded foe, — this year peculiarly severe and premature. The snow already fell in October; but on the 6th of November it descended, driven like a *tourmente* of the Alps, with a force, fury, and denseness unknown except in these northern climates. Amidst such weather the progress of the French, more especially of Ney, was a dire combat against the foe, and the elements as pitiless. The army foundered ere it reached even Smolensk, abandoning piecemeal its artillery, its deeply venged plunder, the cross of Ivan, and the other trophies of the Kremlin. Even at that town, where it arrived November 9th, famine still awaited it. The magazines had been devoured.

Winter became more fierce, the enemy menacing both in front and rear; whilst the French numbers, at least its fighting numbers, did not exceed one-third of the army that had evacuated Moscow. This scanty force was now divided into bands, for the sake of procuring some sustenance, and preserving some order. It was actually surrounded by armies. Tchitschakoff stopped its passage by the Minsk road, Wittgenstein by Vitebsk; whilst Kutusoff was behind, and in flank. The marvel is that a single French soldier escaped. Ney was completely intercepted in his march and summoned to surrender in a position where even the "bravest of the brave" might despair. No feat of the twenty years of war surpasses Ney's retreat.[d]

CRUELTY OF THE RUSSIANS

The barbarity of the Russians indeed passed belief. In the midst of a cold of thirty degrees, they stripped such of the prisoners as they did not kill, and drove them along by thousands. As most dropped upon the road, their numbers were filled up by the gathering of other fugitives, and columns of

[1 According to Duruy[3] Napoleon had only 50,000 men in the ranks when he returned to Smolensk. He had left Moscow with only 80,000 fighters and 800 cannon, but had a following also of 50,000 workmen, women, and children, and a multitude of carriages. With these the Cossacks played havoc, and in Napoleon's own words "even before the battle of the Moskva the army lost more stragglers every day than if a battle had been fought."]

wretches were thus driven to death by the spears of the Cossacks. Those who escaped such fatal driving suffered no less from the bands of peasants, who as mercilessly massacred every captive. The Russian women vied with the men in such barbarity. Great as had been the provocation, one cannot but be disgusted at the total absence of anything like a Christian feeling in the population. We do not hear of any general or authority in any town who made the least effort to stop the barbarity of the peasants. The emperor Alexander issued a proclamation giving a reward for the captives brought in alive. But the love of slaughter was greater than that of money.*q*

The English general Wilson who was with the Russians has testified as follows: "All prisoners were immediately and invariably stripped stark naked and marched in columns in that state, or turned adrift to be the sport and the victims of the peasantry, who would not always let them, as they sought to, point and hold the muzzles of the guns against their own heads or hearts, to terminate their sufferings in the most certain and expeditious manner; for the peasantry thought that this mitigation of torture 'would be an offence against the avenging God of Russia,' and deprive them of his further protection. A remarkable instance of this cruel spirit of retaliation was exhibited on the pursuit to Viazma. Milaradoich, Bennigsen, Korf, and the English general, with various others, were proceeding on the highroad, about a mile from the town, where they found a crowd of peasant women, with sticks in their hands, hopping round a felled pine tree, on each side of which lay about sixty naked prisoners, prostrate but with their heads on the tree, which those furies were striking in accompaniment to a national air or song which they were yelling in concert; while several hundred armed peasants were quietly looking on as guardians of the direful orgies. When the cavalcade approached, the sufferers uttered piercing shrieks, and kept incessantly crying, '*La mort! La mort!*'"*r*

DE CHAMBRAY'S ACCOUNT OF NEY'S RETREAT

On the 17th of November, at two A.M., Ney left Smolensk. His corps was composed of 6,000 infantry, 300 cavalry, and 12 small cannon; about 7,000 stragglers followed and embarrassed the march of the columns. His rearguard had not gone half a league from Smolensk when they heard the mines explode one after the other. The shock was felt afar; lurid flames suddenly lighted the horizon, showing Smolensk for a last time to the French as a mass of ruins. No surgeons had remained with the 5,000 wounded and sick who had been left behind; and they had not been recommended to the mercy of the Russians, but abandoned as worthless instruments, henceforth useless. They were the victims of a senseless and brutal vengeance.

Ney bivouacked at Kovitnia. Next day he resumed the march; the Cossacks appeared in large numbers, and had cannon, which necessitated marching in closer column. The advance-guard reached Katova, and stopped at the sight of the corps of Miloradovitch, which was posted beyond a ravine. Ney hurried forward to the advance-guard. As soon as the French infantry came out of the ravine they experienced the sweeping fire of the numerous Russian artillery. Attacked on all sides, charged by the cavalry, half their men dead, they were repulsed and recrossed the ravine in the greatest disorder. If Miloradovitch had pursued them nothing could have saved Ney. He rallied what remained of the two divisions which had been engaged, behind the one which had not yet fought, and retired in the direction of Smolensk, having decided to cross the Dneiper, so as to put

the river between himself and the Russians. The approach of night favoured his retreat. An officer was sent to him on two separate occasions by Miloradovitch, to tell him that the armies of Eugène and Davout had been annihilated — that Krasnoi was occupied entirely by the Russian army, and that further resistance would be useless. Not only did Ney reject all proposals, but, the officer being sent a third time, he made him prisoner, stating that he could not consider him an envoy merely because the enemy had fired a few cannon-shots; his object in detaining this officer was to prevent him from carrying information as to his position and force.

Officer of Hussars, Time of Napoleon

In the dusk of evening Ney bore towards the right to approach the Dnieper, and stopped at the village of Danikowa; he lighted camp-fires as though he intended to pass the night there. The Russians, not dreaming he could escape them, did the same. After some hours of repose, Ney started again as silently as possible and gained the Dnieper; he had been assured that at this season the river was nowhere fordable between Smolensk and Orsha, and that the least depth was about twelve feet, so his only hope of safety was to cross on the ice. The ice could hardly bear the weight of the men, and soon became broken on the two shores; baggage, artillery, and horses had to be abandoned, and the foot-soldiers were obliged to wade waist deep in water to reach the ice, and to leave it. This extraordinary crossing took place on the night of the 18th–19th of November. The enemy offered no hindrance; only a few Cossacks were there watching. The French corps thus put the river between themselves and the Russian army; but they were reduced to 3,000 men. Platof, who had continued his march on the right bank of the Dnieper, was at a little distance, so new perils succeeded those he had just escaped. On leaving a wood, Ney came out on a wide plain, bordered by the river; it was already occupied by the Cossacks led by Platof in person. Ney engaged immediately. His columns, in serried ranks, kept the Dnieper on their left, while sharp-shooters on the right flank kept off the Cossacks.

As soon as the fight began in the plain, numerous artillery appeared suddenly on the right of the column and cannonaded furiously. In this extremity Ney ordered a quick march to reach a wood which was in front of him; they were just about to gain it when a battery, ambushed in the wood, fired a round of grapeshot on the foremost troops, and scattered destruction and disorder. Sudden despair fell on the soldiers. They threw away their arms, crying out for the first time that they must submit. Ney, who was almost alone on horseback, foamed with rage; he tore along the columns, rousing his men with his terrible voice; he showed them France on the one hand, a frightful captivity on the other; and succeeded in inspiring them with his own audacity. They again seized their arms and with loud cries dashed on the battery, which had barely time to fly. Thus Ney and his men reached the wood, but found no path; they crossed a ravine which presented so many difficulties that they were obliged to leave what horses remained.

At daybreak November 20th they were again on the march. As daylight faded, they stopped at a village situated near a wood. Not being more than a day's march from Orsha, Ney sent on two officers to inform Napoleon of his dire distress; then, at nine o'clock at night, he set out again in silence so as to get in front of the enemy. They hoped at last to reach Orsha, when, on coming out of a wood, they saw at a little distance camp fires that seemed to indicate the presence of an army of 20,000 men. Were they French or were they Russians? Ney, to make sure, sent on a reconnoitring party who were received with shots and a heavy roll of drums. Yielding to despair, Ney ordered a charge and dashed on to the enemy's bivouac to cut a way through. What was his astonishment to find the camp empty save for a few Cossacks who were fleeing. Thus the intrepidity of the French general unveiled a stratagem that Platof had planned to make them imagine the presence of a corps of infantry.

However, Ney continued his march on Orsha, though he was not sure that this town had not already fallen into the hands of the Russians. The country was sheltered, and the Cossacks only harassed his rearguard. The highway from Vitebsk to Orsha was reached at midnight on the 21st of November, at about three leagues from the latter place. Here he found French videttes of the 4th corps, and soon after joined Eugène, who had started to meet him as soon as the officers who had been sent on the day before had informed him of Ney's arrival on the right bank of the Dnieper, and of his extreme distress. So ended this remarkable retreat. Ney seemed safe, but constantly recurring evils awaited his unfortunate soldiers and scarcely one of them regained his native land.[n]

Napoleon now led the paltry 12,000 who remained of the 250,000 who had entered Russia forward to the river Beresina which he reached near Borrisoff. Here he met the corps of Victor and of Oudinot which had been left to hold the river Düna. These 17,000 gazed in bewilderment at the débris of the grand army, which showed all its trials, as the greater part had suffered all the agonies of famine, not as in a besieged city, but on the march through a winter bitter beyond the wont even of Russian winters. The cold was, however, the least of the horrors; as Charras[o] has said, "it but finished the work of death and dissolution nearly achieved by the enemy, by hardship, and chiefly by famine." The crossing of the river Beresina was the final act of one of the most stupendous military tragedies in the world's history.[a]

CAPEFIGUE ON THE PASSAGE OF BERESINA (1812 A.D.)

The muster-roll drawn up on the eve of the passage is terrible to contemplate; the old guard, which alone preserved its attitude and personnel, numbered barely 3,500 men; Bessières' brilliant and splendid cavalry, those magnificent corps of the guard, now mustered 1,400 men. Beyond these picked troops, there was nothing; Davout commanded a bare thousand bayonets; Ney, 3,000; Eugène, 1,200; Junot had not one single soldier; and, most terrible of all, the cavalry reserve, formerly numbering 32,000 horse, was now declared on the muster-roll as but 100 men, commanded by Latour-Maubourg. Thus the highly coloured accounts of the losses sustained at the passage of the Beresina are as incorrect as the accounts of the disasters occasioned by the cold. Napoleon no longer possessed an army, therefore he could not lose one; the only two corps which engaged in the conflict were those of Victor and Oudinot, the one 10,000 men strong,

the other 7,000, neither of which had gone through the campaign of Moscow. As to the obsequies of that great giant, known as the army of Russia, they were finished and the huge bones scattered before the intense cold arrived or the passage of the Beresina took place; at the Beresina there were only the guard and the corps of Victor and Oudinot, which gloriously repaid their welcome.

Scarcely had the emperor entered into communication with Oudinot when he wrote to him to seize immediately the head of the Borrisoff bridge — he must have a passage at any cost; there were points which were but inadequately defended — these must be taken. An indescribable impression of sadness prevailed in the army; it was known that Wittgenstein lay on the right, and Tchitschakoff on the left, and that they had cut off the bridges; thus everything would depend upon the bold and impetuous manœuvring of Oudinot. He commenced demonstrations at Borrisoff to put the enemy on the wrong scent. Victor repelled Wittgenstein by heroic efforts, and Napoleon arrived in person to hasten the construction of the bridges.

On the morning of November 26th, all was completed; the zeal of the pontooners was boundless; they flung themselves into the floods, and swam in those muddy, icy, deadly waters; nothing daunted them, for it was a question of saving the miserable remains of the grand army. The enemy had appeared in all directions round the Beresina; upon the craggy heights, amidst the clustering trees. The first bridge built, Oudinot crossed over to the right bank, and threw himself with desperate courage upon the enemy; one road was now open to him. A second bridge was thrown across, destined for the carriages and artillery.

On the 27th a portion of the army was upon the right bank, only the corps under Victor's command remained facing Wittgenstein; they protected the confused crowds scattered in the marshes and crowding up to force their way across. The most fainthearted, the most heavily laden with plunder were not the last; those very men who had compromised the safety of the army, the laggards and pillagers, made the passage slow and dangerous; the narrow bridge was contested in the midst of anguish and strange cries like that of death in the *Divine Comedy*. However, the remnant under Eugène, Latour-Maubourg, and Davout passed over to the right bank, and there only remained Partonneaux's and Gérard's divisions on the left. An indescribable confusion reigned on all sides; the fugitives prevented all order in the steady ranks of the army, they invaded the regiments, and broke up the battalions; it was for this reason that Partonneaux was swept away, surrounded by Wittgenstein's corps, and forced to surrender.

Then it was that the Russian scheme revealed itself in all its energy; the hostile generals allowed half the troops to pass over to the right bank; they wished to separate them, and overcome them more easily by attacking them in sections. When Ney, Oudinot, Napoleon, and the guard were on the right bank, suddenly the thunder of cannon was heard. Tchitschakoff appeared and fell upon two columns with the greatest impetuosity; Oudinot was wounded, and Ney alone remained in command; the action lasted two hours. Then arose another danger: Victor was still on the left bank, Partonneaux had surrendered, Gérard's division mustered barely five thousand men; it was vigorously attacked by Wittgenstein and the army of Finland.

At this moment the throng of fugitives from Moscow were seized with panic, and it was by their cowardice that the bridge was obstructed, and they were crushed beneath the hoofs of horses, or pushed into the Beresina: some of Wittgenstein's bullets had rebounded into their serried ranks. The

plunderers refused to be separated from their conveyances or their money; they clung to their booty. Whilst Victor on one bank, Ney and Oudinot on the other, sacrificed their brave followers, the cowards broke into the ranks, destroyed the order of the divisions, and obstructed every road.

At last, it became necessary for the safety of the army that the bridges should be destroyed; so the frail work of the engineers was set alight, and there remained on the other bank, after Victor had defiled, about five thousand persons, in a state of the greatest confusion. The hosts of Platof's Cossacks surrounded this swarm, which held out entreating hands; no harm was done them, for the sight of these crowds was pitiful; there were women and children amongst them, but they were mostly composed of those men whom the soldier brands with the name of marauder. The Russian bulletins testify to the sentiments of pity which were manifested even by the Cossacks at the sight of such miserable terror.

CLAUDE FRANÇOIS DE MALET
(1754–1812)

The active army had crossed the Beresina after unheard-of difficulties and glorious actions. It is impossible to describe the brilliant courage displayed by Victor and Oudinot's two corps; it appeared marvellous. Ney left wonderful souvenirs, Eugène distinguished himself; Davout had been nerveless and Junot absolutely null. Must it be confessed? — the roll call, a few leagues beyond Beresina, numbered but 8,800 men! the nucleus of proven troops, for they had withstood much. Around them shapeless masses constantly hovered, in a condition of complete disorganisation, a pell-mell of soldiers, officers, and generals.

There was no longer any such thing as rank; they dwelt in an intimacy most injurious to discipline; the general stretched out his hand to the soldier if the latter had more supplies than he. Here and there were stupefied creatures whose intelligence had fled, and who now possessed no instinct other than that of the brute beast.[k]

END OF THE CAMPAIGN

The Beresina froze completely in a short time after, forming a huge grave in which the dead did not decay. In the spring the Russians had leisure to count the bodies. They amounted to an army's number, about 20,000.[1] From the Beresina, crossed in the last days of November, the French pursued the road to Vilna, their first Russian conquest, presenting the appearance

[1 According to Duruy[s] the governor of Minsk burned 24,000 corpses.]

of a complete rout, the corps of Victor as disorganised as those of its more wearied comrades. Here a stand might be made — at least, a momentary one. But to repair the great disaster without another army, such as Napoleon's personal presence and exertion could alone command from France now reluctant and despondent, was impossible.

The political tidings from the capital were also disquieting. A conspiracy for the overthrow of the imperial power had nearly succeeded.[d] General Malet, imprisoned for a plot in 1808, had managed to escape; by announcing that Napoleon had died in Moscow and showing a forged order from the senate making him commander-in-chief, he had seized the heads of government and obtained a following in the national guard. At length he had met resistance, however, and this put an end to his hopes. He had been tried and shot with fifteen of his accomplices. Paris had known nothing of this till its failure, and as Martin[b] says, "learned simultaneously of the overthrow and the re-establishment of the empire." Ludicrous as the fiasco was in many ways, it came so near success that Napoleon exclaimed, realising how personal was his hold on France, "Is one man, then, everything — are institutions, oaths nothing?" He resolved to return to Paris at once.[a]

Napoleon left the wreck of his army at Smorgoni on December 5th (as he had left his Egyptian army thirteen years before), travelling in a carriage placed upon a sledge and accompanied by Caulaincourt and Duroc. He had an interview with Maret outside Vilna, and then travelled to Warsaw, where he saw his ambassador De Pradt, who has left an account of his confused talk. Here, as in the famous 29th bulletin, published a little after, we observe that he consoles himself for the loss of his army by reflecting that his own health was never better — he kept on repeating this. Then he said, "From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step"; for the retreat from Moscow struck him as ridiculous! From Warsaw he passed to Dresden, where he saw his ally the king of Saxony, and wrote letters to the emperor of Austria and to the king of Prussia. He then made his way by Erfurt and Mainz to Paris, where he arrived on December 18th. The bulletin had appeared two days before.[e]

Murat, to whom Napoleon had left the command, had neither the authority nor the energy which such circumstances required. Besides, the cold reached twenty degrees and 20,000 men perished in three days. The enemy, which could march only very slowly, caught up with the French at Vilna. Ney held them in check for a long time at the head of a handful of braves; again he defended the bridge of Kovno fighting like a grenadier, gun in hand; he was the last to pass the Niemen, December 20th. That ended the retreat and the fatal campaign. Behind the river the French left dead or captives 300,000 soldiers. And yet they had not really been defeated once. It was winter and hunger, not the enemy that killed the grand army. The Russians themselves, accustomed as they were to their terrible climate, suffered horribly; in three weeks Kutusoff had lost three-fourths of his effective forces.[g]

Alison comments on Kutusoff's policy as follows: "Justice requires that due credit should be given to the Russian mode of pursuit by a parallel march: a measure which was unquestionably one of the greatest military achievements of the last age. Had Kutusoff pursued by the same road as the French, his army, moving on a line wasted by the triple curse of three previous marches, would have melted away even more rapidly than his enemy's. But caution was the great characteristic of the man. By acting a bolder part, he might have gained more brilliant, but he could not have

secured more lasting success: he would have risked the fate of the empire, which hung on the preservation of his army: he might have acquired the title of Napoleon, but he would not have deserved that of saviour of his country.

But it would have been in vain that all these advantages lay within the reach of Russia, had their constancy and firmness not enabled her people to grasp them. Justice had not hitherto been done to the heroism of their conduct. We admire the Athenians, who refused to treat with Xerxes after the sack of their city, and the Romans, who sent troops to Spain after the defeat of Cannae; what then shall we say of the generals who, while their army was yet reeking with the slaughter of Borodino, formed the project of enveloping the invader in the capital which he had conquered? what of the citizens, who fired their palaces and their temples lest they should furnish even a temporary refuge to the invader? and what of the sovereign who, undismayed by the conflagration of Moscow, announced to his people, in the moment of their greatest agony, his resolution never to submit, and foretold the approaching deliverance of his country and of the world? Time, the great sanctifier of events, has not yet lent its halo to these sacrifices."[a]

Napoleon had said to Pradt that he intended to raise 300,000 men and be on the Niemen again in the spring. The first part of this intention he fulfilled, for in April he reappeared in the field with 300,000 men; but the campaign was not fought on the line of the Niemen, nor of the Vistula, nor of the Oder, and he had to fight a battle before he could even reach the Elbe. For a great event took place less than a fortnight after his arrival in Paris, the defection of the Prussian contingent under York from the grand army; this event led to the rising of Prussia against Napoleon.[c]

CHAPTER XXI

THE REVOLUTION OF EUROPE AGAINST NAPOLEON

[1812–1814 A.D.]

> The winter of 1812–1813 had been very sombre for France; the winter of 1813–1814 opened full of presages yet more dismal. After the great generation of soldiers that had been swallowed up in the snows of Russia, a second generation was to be devoured by the battle-fields of Germany.—HENRI MARTIN.[b]

THERE was now no pretext for war except the so-called maritime tyranny of England; but yet the magnitude of wars had increased beyond all measurement. The campaign of 1812 left everything in civilised history far behind it. All the abuses of the old monarchy and all the atrocities of the Revolution put together were nothing compared to this new plague, bred between the Revolution and the old monarchy, having the violence of the one and the vainglory of the other, with a barbarous destructiveness peculiar to imperialism superadded. But what was Napoleon's position? Any government but the strongest would have sunk under such a blow, but Napoleon's government was the strongest, and at its strongest moment. Opposition had long been dead; public opinion was paralysed; no immediate rising was to be feared. Should he then simply take the lesson home, and make peace with Alexander? This was impossible; he must efface the disaster by new triumphs. But, as this was evident to all, Alexander could not but perceive that he must not lose a moment, but must hasten forward and rouse Germany before Napoleon should have had time to levy a new army; 1813 must be filled with a war in Germany, as 1812 with a war in Russia.[c]

THE SIXTH COALITION

The coalition began to make ready for the grand struggle which seemed likely to be the last. England strengthened her alliance with Russia, and made a treaty with Sweden, by which she undertook to take in her pay the

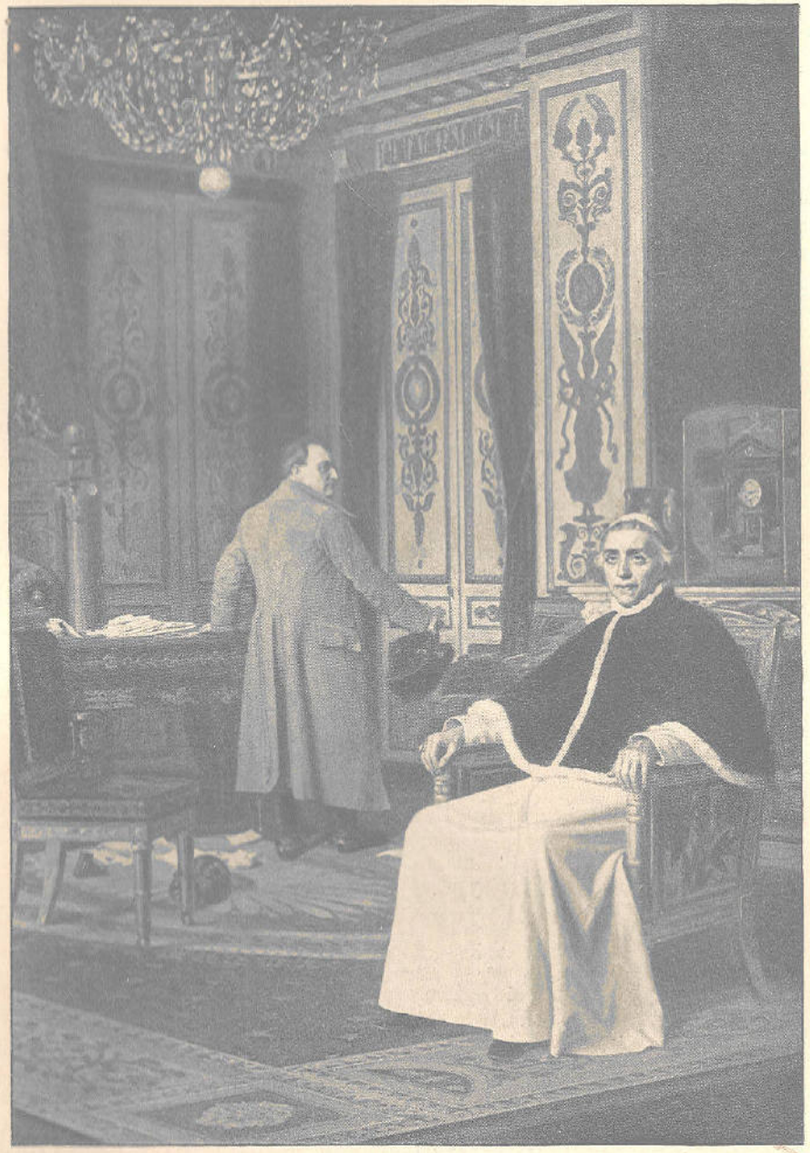
30,000 men commanded by Bernadotte.[1] She sent proclamations all over Germany, and subsidised secret societies; she summoned the king of Prussia to enter the coalition, threatening to establish a provisional government in his states; she entreated Austria to avenge her former defeats, offering her Italy, and assuring her that Germany was ready to rise against France, and that France herself was on the eve of a great revolution. On the decisions of Prussia and Austria depended the success of the struggle.

Prussia, to gain time, proposed a truce between Russia and France, and even offered to mediate. Napoleon rejected this. Then Frederick William signed a secret treaty of alliance (February 22nd, 1813) with Alexander "to insure the independence of Europe and re-establish Prussia within her limits of 1806." Russia could command 150,000 men, and Prussia 80,000; they were not to make peace separately, and Russia promised to get subsidies from England for Prussia. Prussia continued, nevertheless, to negotiate with France on the basis of alliance, then suddenly declared war (March 17th, 1813). Two days later Alexander and Frederick concluded the convention of Breslau, by which all the German princes were called to concur in the enfranchisement of their country, under penalty of being deprived of their states. The confederation of the Rhine was declared dissolved; a council was appointed to administer the conquered provinces for the benefit of the allies, and to organise a simultaneous rising in the states of the confederation. Orders were given to the *Landsturm* to harass the enemy, to kill isolated soldiers, to destroy provisions, etc.

Then the great movement of German independence, so skilfully manœuvred by the sovereigns, began. The Germans had looked on Napoleon only as a conqueror, and on his acts as war, and they had suffered the most in the war between France and old Europe, without deriving any profit. "That they should hate me," said Napoleon, "is natural enough. For ten years I have been forced to fight while treading on their dead. They have never known my real intentions." So they believed that by taking arms against France they would obtain their liberty; their movement was purely revolutionary; courts and cabinets were carried away by them and had to simulate the enthusiastic passion of Prussian and Westphalian students. Kings, ministers, generals became demagogues, borrowed the style of '93, promised to grant constitutions in order to excite the people against the modern Attila. "People —" ran their proclamations, "be free, join with us! God is on our side. We will defy hell and its allies! All distinctions of rank, birth, and country are banished from our ranks; we are all free men!" "Germans," said Wittgenstein, "we open the Russian ranks to you; there you will find the labourer side by side with the prince. All distinctions of rank are effaced before the great ideas of king, liberty, honour, and country." "Liberty or death!" cried another; "Germans, from 1812, our genealogical trees shall count as nothing. The exploits of our ancestors are effaced by the degradation of their descendants. The regeneration of Germany alone can produce fresh noble families, and restore their splendour to those who formerly possessed it."

Thus the revolutionary weapons which Napoleon had refused to employ against kings were used by the kings themselves against him, and he had nothing more to employ against them than the regular resources of ancient

[1 Napoleon said of Bernadotte, who owed to France his crown, "In taking a wife it is not necessary to renounce a mother: still less need one pierce her bosom and tear out her entrails."[d] Seeley,[e] however, credits Bernadotte with a desire to appease France and succeed Napoleon as monarch.]



PIUS VII AND NAPOLEON AT FONTAINEBLEAU

monarchies. While Austria ordered Schwarzenberg to return to Galicia and signed an indefinitely prolonged truce with Russia, she declared to France that she would remain unshaken in her system; that the alliance was founded on interests most natural, most permanent, and essentially necessary, and would last forever. "We engage," she said, "only to act as convenient to the emperor Napoleon, to do nothing without his knowledge, and, if the Russians refuse peace, to employ all the forces of the monarchy against them." At the same time Francis counselled the king of Prussia "not to arrest the noble enthusiasm which had led him to second the efforts of the emperor of Russia for the maintenance of the independence of Europe." Never had any European cabinet shown such shameful duplicity; but Francis was not yet ready for war, and while preparing his armaments he waited to see the result of the first hostilities so as to be ready either to sell his alliance to Napoleon, or to complete the ruin of the latter.[e]

It was fortunate, perhaps, for Napoleon that there was danger as well as sorrow to excite the people. The thought of France being invaded had never entered anyone's mind since the alarms of 1793. The military enthusiasm of the nation prevailed over the grief of individuals, and by the end of April, 1813, 300,000 soldiers were on their way to the Rhine.[1] The emperor was fully awake to the perils of his situation. He resolved to put his house in order before he joined the army, and entered into negotiations with a prisoner whom he had seized some years before, and tried to coerce into obedience to his will. This was the venerable Pius VII, the pope of Rome. After keeping him at Savona for some time he brought him to Fontainebleau, and now forced or deluded the old man into a concordat (January 25th, 1813) which allowed him, indeed, to execute the spiritual offices of the chief pontiff, but restored him the domains of the church shorn of their independent rights. He was to be pope of Christendom, but no longer sovereign of an earthly state. Having thus got quit of a rival potentate in his kingdom of Italy, he hurried to the frontier.[f]

THE WAR WITH PRUSSIA AND RUSSIA (MAY–JUNE, 1813 A.D.)

Napoleon left St. Cloud on the 15th of April. In a few days he was with his army, now once more on the Elbe and the Saale, reduced to fight near the field of Jena those Prussians whom it had conquered there. The emperor brought to the 40,000 men under the viceroy a new army of upwards of 80,000 — all, however, young soldiers that had never yet seen fire. "What shall we do with such sucking pigs?" exclaimed an old general on beholding them. The allies were in possession and in advance of Dresden. They marched on the 1st of May to prevent Napoleon from occupying Leipsic, and met him a short distance from that town, at Lützen, the scene of the last victory and death of Gustavus Adolphus. The Prussians, under Blücher, led the attack. The quarrel being now more German than Russian, it was for the Germans to bear the brunt. The Prussians were not backward to measure themselves with their enemies, and avenge their former defeats: but this they vainly attempted at Lützen.[2] Napoleon's young

[1 Seeley[e] says, "Infatuated France furnished more than 400,000 men, to perish in a contest where there might be chances, but could be no probabilities of victory." He places the force of the allies at nearly 500,000.]

[2 The Germans sometimes call the battle of Lützen by the name of the village of Grossgörschen.]

army, encouraged by his presence and words, repulsed every effort, and remained masters of the field. Then 16 battalions of the young guard, supported by the old guard in échelons, and covered by 24 pieces, dashed headlong on Kaya, took it, and forced the enemy to retreat, leaving on the field of battle 15,000 men.

Napoleon was intoxicated with victory. "In all the twenty years that I have commanded the French army," he said, "I have never seen more bravery and devotion. My brave young soldiers! Honour and courage filled their every vein!" But his victory cost him 12,000 men, and the result of so much effort was only 2,000 prisoners, and, lacking the cavalry lost in Russia, there was no pursuit of the vanquished. The allied army retired on Dresden, and after some rearguard skirmishing on the Mulde it repassed the Elbe. Napoleon followed it and entered Dresden, where he re-established the king of Saxony, who gave him a contingent of 15,000 men, May 9th. The enemy went by Bautzen to Silesia, abandoning the defence of Berlin so as to remain near to Bohemia.[c]

At Dresden Napoleon received the envoy of Austria, who now proposed to change her character of ally for that of mediator. She demanded certain augmentation of territory, still not extending her views to Italy, and the independence of the smaller German states. Concession to these not arrogant demands would, in the words of the emperor Francis, have consolidated the dynasty of Bonaparte. He would not admit them, however. A bridge had been thrown over the Elbe, and he marched to attack the Austrians and Prussians at Bautzen. They were in a position of great strength, occupying those hills which form the natural boundaries of Silesia. Napoleon forced the passage of the Spree in their front, and occupied Bautzen. He was obliged to spend the whole of the 20th in so fighting and manœuvring as to get within reach of the allies.

On the 21st the battle was fought. He commenced by simultaneous attacks on the wings; the line however, was so extended, embracing many leagues, and intersected with hills, that it was impossible to watch the success of these movements. Till assured of this, Napoleon would not advance his centre. He was himself with it in the midst of the cannonade, and fell asleep, overcome by fatigue. At length, upon hearing fresh sounds of artillery in the distance, his officers awoke him. By the direction of the sound he knew his wing to be victorious, and instantly ordered forward his centre and guard. The allies were beaten, and obliged to evacuate their line of defence, which covered Silesia, and retire into Bohemia. But their retreat was orderly, leaving not a cannon nor a prisoner.[1] At the close of one of the combats which followed up the action, some of the emperor's staff, Duroc, Kirchener, and Lebrun, went to water their horses at a brook: it was then that one of the last cannon fired by the retreating enemy cut Kirchener in two, and struck Duroc. He was considered the only friend of Napoleon. The latter, whatever must have been his inward grief, did not display those theatrical signs of it which divers memoir writers have imagined and described.

The victory of Bautzen opened to the French a passage to the Oder. Glogau was relieved, Breslau occupied, Berlin itself threatened. The Russian and Prussian armies retreated towards Austria, imploring its aid. It was at this moment that the emperor Francis interposed with his mediation. A message, proposing an armistice, reached the French camp the day after the battle of Bautzen. After some conferences, Napoleon consented to it,[1] in order that negotiations might commence.

[1] It was a splendid victory, but as fruitless as that of Lützen. The enemy had lost 18,000 men, but they had inflicted on the French a loss of 12,000. They (the allies) retired in good order, burning their baggage, ravaging the entire route, fighting at each stream, at each ravine. Weissenberg and Reichenbach were taken by hard fighting, and beyond this last village the enemy was still found posted, May 22nd. "What!" said the emperor. "After such a slaughter, no result — no prisoners? Those men have not left me a single pin!" c]

AUSTRIA JOINS THE COALITION (1813 A.D.)

If ever the hand of fate was visible, it was in the fall of Napoleon. Had he been repulsed from Bautzen ere Austria had entered into stipulation with the allies, this power would not have pressed for more than the independence of Germany; and Napoleon might and ought to have granted it. Now she made the same request; the abandonment of the duchy of Warsaw to the three powers, of Illyria to herself, the re-establishment of the Prussian monarchy, and the dissolution of the confederation of the Rhine. But now Bonaparte could not, would not yield; and Austria was flung into the alliance of his enemies. "How much did England give you to make war upon me?" asked he of Metternich, imprudently insulting that statesman.

And, in truth, Great Britain did put forth all her powers on this occasion, and at the right time. Sweden was in her pay; and now subsidy treaties were concluded with Russia and with Prussia. Her victories, as well as her purse, contributed to rouse and push to its conclusion that European reaction against France, which otherwise might have languished. The tidings of the battle of Vitoria, in which Wellington and the British showed that their powers and talents were not confined to defensive warfare, came at the very epoch to strengthen the confidence of German courts and ministers. Austria insisted with firmness that Napoleon should be contented with the Rhine for his frontier. He, in evading the demand, required merely the neutrality of his father-in-law. This was declared impossible; and the accession of Austria to the allies was announced by brilliant fireworks on the 10th of August, 1813. In a few days after, the armistice expired.

The French, hitherto secure from attack on the side of southern Germany, had now to expect the Austrians, 200,000 strong, on the side of Bavaria, and in Italy. The Russians and the Prussians themselves were reinforced. Napoleon's chief officers advised him to retreat at once to the Rhine. In answer, he bade them this time obey. He had fortified Dresden, and distributed his force in eleven small armies or divisions round it; himself, with his guard as a reserve, holding Dresden, ready to unite, in any emergency, the separate but not disjointed portions of his force. Bernadotte, crown prince of Sweden, menaced from the north; Blücher [now seventy years old] with his army from the east; Schwarzenberg with the grand army from the mountain of Bohemia, southward. It was singular enough that the motions of this army of European reaction against France should have been directed by two old generals of the French Republic — Bernadotte and Moreau: the latter was now in the service of Alexander, directing Russian and Austrian columns against his countrymen. No jealousy or injustice of the present ruler of France could warrant the hero in acting the renegade.[2]

On the first expiration of the armistice, Napoleon had hastened from Dresden with his guard, and joined some of his divisions, to surprise Blü-

[1] This is called the armistice of Poischwitz, June 4th–August 10th, 1813.]

[2] Seeley c credits Moreau, fresh from the United States, with a probable desire to see France again a republic "ruled by a series of Washingtons each holding office for a short term."]

cher. But that general, according to the plan agreed on, retreated ; and he had the satisfaction to see two regiments of Westphalians desert the French ranks. In the meantime Schwarzenberg had descended upon Dresden, and commenced pressing upon it on the 21st. Saint-Cyr had but 20,000 men to oppose to the Prince's formidable army : he still kept it at bay. On the 25th the attack became general, and there were few hopes of holding out till the evening, when Napoleon's columns appeared hurrying from the pursuit of Blücher; and entering the city, they did but traverse it to meet the enemy, who, already victorious, were at the gate with hatchets, shouting "Paris! Paris!" as the next object of their march. The unexpected sally of the French repulsed the enemy. On the following two days the battle was renewed, and Napoleon succeeded in routing Schwarzenberg.

The battle of Dresden was more decisive than either Lützen or Bautzen. The Austrians left their cannon and twenty thousand prisoners. This was some consolation to Napoleon. Fortune had prepared him another, in the death of Moreau, mortally wounded in the day's action. The victory of Dresden was soon, however, to be counterbalanced by defeat. Vandamne, who pursued a division of the retreating army into Bohemia, with his whole division was obliged to surrender (August 30th) at Kulm.

The defensive plan of the allies, said to have been recommended by Bernadotte, now proved fatal to Napoleon. Their rule was always to retreat from him, but always to make head against his lieutenants. Thus Oudinot, sent against Berlin, was defeated by the prince of Sweden, in the battle of Gross-Beeren (August 23rd) ; and Ney, despatched to repair this loss, could not master fortune (September 6th). His Saxon regiments deserted in the action, and it was evident that none of the auxiliaries could be depended on. Napoleon himself more than once marched to encounter Blücher ; but that wary Prussian fled at the approach of the arch-enemy, and avoided measuring himself with Napoleon. Not so when Macdonald presented himself. Blücher fell on him and his division, and fought the battle of the Katzbach (August 26–29th), in which the French were defeated with great loss. The campaigns round Dresden resembled what Homer recounts of the siege of Troy. When Achilles rushed forth, all was rout, flight, and slaughter: when he retired, his enemies showed courage, and failed not to gain the advantage. Still, though beaten in detail, the plan and resolves of Bonaparte were unyielding and giant-like. But he was obliged to succumb to circumstances. The allied force, daily increasing, soon came to double that of the French, hourly diminishing. Bavaria was obliged to declare against him ; Leipsic was menaced in his rear ; and at length, in the middle of October, Napoleon transferred his quarters from Dresden to that town.[g]

THE BATTLE OF LEIPSIC (OCTOBER 16–18TH, 1813)

Napoleon determined with all the troops available, numbering about 190,000 men, to take up as firm a position as possible round the town, and thus prevent the two armies of the enemy from joining. Thus the battle of Leipsic began on the 16th of October, the "battle of nations" according to the Germans, and the "battle of giants" according to the French, practically a succession of battles on the surface of a square mile. The first day the forces were equal, as at one time only Schwarzenberg, with 120,000 men, and Blücher, with 70,000, were at hand ; but after Bernadotte and Bennigsen had joined on the 17th, there was a crushing superiority of the allies on the 18th. The sharpest fighting was carried on by the Silesian army and

above all by York, who on the 16th, at Möckern, completely annihilated Marmont's corps after a severe struggle ; moreover the issue of the battle and campaign was decided by the position, and on the 18th Napoleon fought only for the safety of his retreat.[h]

It was time. On the very next day, the 16th, the allies approached ; Bernadotte and Blücher from the north, Schwarzenberg from the south, the Russians joining him. Napoleon himself opposed Schwarzenberg, and held his post the entire day on the verge of the hills which border the plain of Leipsic. Ney was not so fortunate on the north. Blücher and his Prussians fought with inveterate audacity ; and Ney, after dreadful loss, was obliged to retire behind the Partha. The only decided success was on the western side of Leipsic, where General Bertrand drove back Gyulai and thus cleared the road towards France.

Whilst Napoleon was arranging his posts, and occupying a line of defence nearer to Leipsic, the Austrian general Meerfeldt, the same who had come with the flag of truce after Austerlitz, was brought in prisoner. Him Napoleon now sent to the emperor of Austria with a similar message, and a demand of an armistice. "The word," said he, "must awaken recollection." But the Austrian was not to be touched by association; no answer was returned: and preparations continued on the 17th for fresh attack on one side, for honourable defence and now inevitable retreat, on the other.

The allies, despite their advantages and numbers, awaited the fresh corps of Bennigsen [78,000 strong]. On the night of the 17th, Bertrand was ordered to commence the retreat, and to secure the passes of the Saale. On the 18th the battle commenced on the north, east, and south of Leipsic. The French were hemmed in by a circle of fire and bayonets, dealt by treble their numbers. Still they remained firm. Poniatowski and his gallant Poles kept Schwarzenberg in check. Macdonald fought the Russians; and when sorely pressed, Napoleon and his guard came to his aid, and repelled the enemy.

To the north of this attack Bernadotte advanced upon Reynier, whose division consisted partly of Saxon corps: these troops, being ordered to march, obeyed indeed, but it was instantly to desert and join the enemy. Bernadotte turned their cannon instantly against the French; and as it swept away whole files by a raking fire, the name of Saxon and of Bernadotte were muttered with curses of execration.[1] Even in this unlooked-for disaster Napoleon preserved his calm — filled up the void left by the Saxons with his guard, and fiercely continued the combat. It was the afternoon. The allies, despairing to force the French ranks, retired and commenced a cannonade ; which produced every desired effect of slaughter, and of forcing the defenders to risk their force in offensive movements.[g]

Night alone separated the combatants and put an end to the carnage. So ended the famous battle of the 18th of October. The allies opposed 300,000 soldiers to the 120,000 of Napoleon. The élite of the French army was mown down in the fields of Leipsic. The enemy also lost 60,000 men, and they would have hesitated to attack the French on the ramparts of Leipsic if the latter had had munitions to defend themselves. But in the last five days the army had used 250,000 cannon balls, and there were only 10,000

[1 The baron de Norvins,[i] who was present, comments: "This military crime, the most odious that the annals of war present, fittingly took place under the flag of the French ex-marshal, Bernadotte, who came, as crown prince of Sweden, to deal a blow at his country. The enemy, even, did not disguise their indignation at such perfidy." The Saxon king, who was with Napoleon, deeply regretted the perfidy of his men.]

cartouches in the ammunition chests — that is, hardly enough to keep up a two-hours' fire. The nearest reserves were at Erfurt and Magdeburg; it was therefore necessary to leave Leipsic, and a retreat was decided on. In the evening the guns and wagons filed to Lützen, the scene of Napoleon's first victory in the campaign! The cavalry, the guard, and part of the infantry followed in the night. The march was difficult through the pass, two leagues long, which separates Leipsic from Lindenau, and which is crossed by several rivers over which, in spite of Napoleon's reiterated commands, no bridges had been built.

At the unhoped-for news of the retreat, the allies were exceedingly joyful and threw all their forces on Leipsic. Poniatowski and Lauriston defended the southern suburb. Two hours more of this resistance and the rearguard was saved, and re-united, with all the equipment, to the army, which Napoleon already had under cover; for the emperor, under whose direction the first bridge had been mined, had given command to the first engineer to blow it up at the approach of the enemy.

Passing through all obstacles, the emperor arrived at the last bridge, that of Lindenau Mill; here he dismounted, and saw to the placing of staff officers on the route to indicate to isolated men the rendezvous of each corps; he then dictated instructions to the duke of Tarentum, whom he put in command of the whole rearguard. Worn out with the fatigues of the night and the emotions of the day, Napoleon slept profoundly to the lullaby of echoing cannon's thunder. Suddenly a louder explosion was heard: the king of Naples and the duke of Castiglione entered the emperor's room and announced that the Elster bridge had been blown up. Thus, nearly 20,000 men were cut off. The rearguard gave way to despair; some swore to die rather than surrender; others laid down their arms; many, judging resistance useless, flung themselves into the Pleisse and the Elster, but for the greater number of these latter the muddy currents became a watery grave. Marshal Macdonald swam across, General Dumoutier was drowned. Ever since the morning Poniatowski had kept back the allies by prodigies of valour, and, on learning that all hope was lost, he said to his officers, "Now let us die with honour." So saying, he dashed, followed by a few horsemen, right into the enemy's ranks; wounded, surrounded, unable to break through, he crossed the Pleisse; he reached the shores of the Elster, already lined by Russian sharp-shooters, urged his horse into the waters, and there met death.

What was the cause of this horrible disaster? The allies had taken the suburbs, and the French rearguard had been driven back on the boulevards, when the defection of a Badois battalion, who abandoned the gate of St. Pierre, opened the city to the enemy, who dashed in. Then three French corps who were defending it, tried, while still fighting, to gain the highroad. Their heroic valour would have assured their retreat, if the chief engineer, charged with the destruction of the bridge after they had crossed, had not confided this important duty to a mere corporal of the sappers. The sapper, armed with the fatal fuse, thought that the whole of the enemy was approaching; he carried out his orders and cut off the only way of safety from the brave soldiers whose courage had kept back the bulk of the allies. Thus this heroic rearguard, 200 guns, and immense stores were taken from Napoleon. It is true that the enemy lost more than 24,000 men, but this enormous loss did not compensate for the disorganisation of the French army, the wreck of fortunes, and the ruin of French influence in Europe. The battles of Leipsic cost the French 30,000 men, of whom 20,000 were killed; 22,000 more were left wounded in the Leipsic hospitals, and 17

generals were taken.[1] The king of Saxony was made prisoner. They proclaimed him a traitor to the allies for not having betrayed his ally. He was taken to Prussia.

Napoleon was behind the last bridge of Lindenau when the Elster bridge was blown up. He formed his guard into battle array and fixed his batteries, being obliged to protect the débris of his army as far as the Saale. Ere he reached the Rhine with his shattered troops, he had to encounter a glaring instance of political ingratitude. If he had bestowed benefits on any land, it was Bavaria, which he had amplified, honoured, and made a kingdom of. Now an army of Bavarians crossed his path, and barred his entry into France. They occupied Hanau. A charge of the remnant of the old imperial guard sufficed to punish and to rout the Bavarians.

The revolutionary tide that twenty years previously had overflowed the Alps and the Rhine, changing the face and destroying the old landmarks of Europe, devastating some regions, but, it must be owned, fertilising others, was now rolled back into its ancient bed; and the monarchs, like the cultivators of Egypt after an inundation of the Nile, began again to claim and mark the properties. Germany had already freed itself. Hanover resumed its allegiance to England. Holland dismissed its French governor, and recalled its ancient stadholder. Bernadotte in the north, and Murat in the south, alone held their regal stations by joining the allies against Napoleon. The king of Naples advanced in concert with the Austrians against the prince Eugène and aided in expelling the French from Italy. The emperor himself now set free the pope and Ferdinand of Spain, both to retake possession of their dominions. The English, under Wellington, had already driven the French to the north of the Pyrenees.

In the meantime the victorious sovereigns at Frankfort answered the demand for peace made by Napoleon. They offered him France, imperial France, with the Rhine for its boundary. Not to have accepted this fair, this generous offer, was madness. Even if he intended to renew the struggle at another time, he should have closed with such an offer, that left him Mainz, Antwerp, France, and years to recruit his exhausted resources. Pride and honour both forbade; he could not bear the idea of rendering the realm less than he had received it from the republic, whose unextinguished partisans might well call him to account. In addition to this he possessed that character, so common, of a hard bargainer, and carried his pretensions far beyond either right or reason, nay, believed in their justice. In answer to the offer of the allies, he declaimed against the maritime superiority and laws of England, and called on her to abate them, precisely as if the balance of victory were reversed. But fortune had spoiled him. His faculties (we must except his military talents) had been developed in prosperity, and could not suit themselves to the hard laws of misfortune.

[1] "There is bound to be discrepancy in the figures of such a conflict of the numbers engaged and the losses. Seeley[e] says: "Perhaps nearly half a million of men were engaged in these final battles. It is reckoned that in the last three days the Prussians lost 16, the Russians 21, and the Austrians 14,000 men — total, 51,000. Napoleon left 23,000 behind him in the hospitals and 15,000 prisoners; his dead may have been 15,000." Von Sybel[h] sums up the result as follows: "The three days' battle had cost the allies 42,000 men, the French 38,000 killed and wounded, and 30,000 prisoners. In the retreat all precipitated themselves towards the Rhine regardless of discipline, and as now a fatal epidemic increased the losses of the war, the destruction of the powerful army was almost as great as the preceding year. The imperial might for the second time was now irretrievably and irreparably lost." White[f] calls the battle of Leipsic "the greatest battle of which any record is kept. The huddled millions of Xerxes, or any Indian invader, present nothing to the mind but confusion and disorder. But at Leipsic the numbers of those ancient and barbaric hosts were nearly equalled, and all the skill of modern warfare and the destructiveness of modern weapons were brought into play."]

Yet his enemies were not confined to the land beyond the Rhine. The old royalists stirred in the provinces; the republicans in the capital. The constitutionalists of the first national assembly began to raise their heads, and build hopes of seeing a representative government or a restoration of the Bourbons. This party, to Napoleon's astonishment, displayed itself in his legislative body. Five of its members, intrusted with the drawing up of an address, ventured to speak of the liberty of the subject; of the necessity of accepting peace, and being contented with the frontier of the Rhine, containing a territory more extensive than the "ancient monarchy." This last allusion excited all the indignation of the emperor; he called the members factious men, sold to England; accused them of talking of liberty when national independence was at stake; and concluded by dissolving the assembly and shutting up its hall of meeting.

Meantime the garrisons left in the fortresses of Germany surrendered one by one, and the allies had made preparations to pass the Rhine. Dearly were the French to pay the loss of that neutrality of Switzerland, which they had set the example of breaking. The Austrians now marched through this country upon a part of France undefended by fortresses, and turned, as it were, the flank of the Rhine; Blücher crossed the river; Bülow still more north; whilst Wellington advanced from the Pyrenees.[1] Napoleon was menaced in Paris with the same fate that had attended him at Leipsic; but he resolved to make a lion's fight of it; the memory of the great Frederick and his reverses cheered him. After naming Maria Louisa regent and intrusting his empress and her infant son to the national guards of his capital, Napoleon left the city for his forlorn campaign, on the 25th of January, 1814.

Schwarzenberg, having marched through upper Burgundy, had come upon the Seine; the course of which he pursued towards Paris. Blücher, from Mainz, passing the Vosges, had reached the Marne. Betwixt these two rivers lay the chief force of the attack, amounting to 150,000 men. Napoleon could not muster half the number; and few, very few, could be called soldiers, at least as yet. Advancing from Châlons, the emperor, throwing himself betwixt Schwarzenberg and Blücher, directed, as usual, his first blow against the latter. The Prussian commander occupied Brienne, the scene of Napoleon's school-days. Napoleon himself exchanged blows with the foe, and was obliged to parry the lances of the Cossacks. Blücher was driven back at length, but not routed, rallying to a position behind Brienne, called Rothière, where, in the space of a day, he was certain of being supported by the army of Schwarzenberg. This junction, which Napoleon had fought the battle of Brienne to prevent, now took place; and Blücher and Schwarzenberg attacked the French in turn, on the 1st of February, with vast superiority of force. Alexander and Frederick William were both present to encourage their army. The French wings resisted heroically, covering the retreat, which was effected in the night. A great number of cannon and prisoners was abandoned. Such was the ominous commencement of the campaign.

Blücher now was all eager to push on to Paris. Being joined by two fresh divisions, he separated from Schwarzenberg and the Austrians, tardy in their advance both from character and from policy. The emperor Francis still wished not to annihilate Napoleon's power; and under his influence the congress of Châtillon opened, to make another attempt at negotiation, whilst Blücher persisted in advancing along the Marne. Napoleon, with his eye on

[1] The allies, on December 1st, 1813, declared that they warred not on France, but on Napoleon.]

the Prussians, sent Caulaincourt to the congress assembled now at Châtillon. In these openings towards accommodation, some new gleams of hope ever occurred to distract the emperor from a sense of his forlorn condition. Blücher's rash advance now inspired him with the plan of surprising and defeating the Prussians. The idea took possession of him; and so full was he of it that he refused to sanction the *carte blanche* to treat, which a few days previously he had given to Caulaincourt. The Prussian general was thus unwittingly, and by his imprudence as much as his sagacity, the ruin of his sworn foe. Bent on defeating Blücher, Napoleon, on the 9th of February, refused to approve of the conditions sent to him from Châtillon by Caulaincourt; and thus nailing up the postern of safety, till then left open for him, he resolved to sally to the point, to conquer or to fall.

NAPOLEON'S LAST VICTORIES

He now abandoned even the important town of Troyes, and transferring his army by cross-roads and forced marches from the Seine to the Marne, he surprised the flank of Blücher, as that general was marching in all boldness upon Paris, confident that the day of La Rothière had been the last serious effort of the French. In this he was severely disappointed. Napoleon fell upon his centre at Champaubert (February 10th), composed of Russians; defeated, routed it, and took a great number of prisoners and cannon. The van, under Osten-Sacken, was thus cut off from its rear, under Blücher. Napoleon, losing not a moment, came up with the former at Montmirail (February 11th), and gained a victory over it equally decisive. It was thus that Blücher, by his rashness, lost two-thirds of his army: he redeemed the blunder, however, by the obstinacy with which, at the head of the remaining third, he retreated before Napoleon, until the advance of the Austrians on the side of the Seine recalled the emperor. The success of Montmirail — the despatch of captured Prussians, Russians, and their cannon to Paris — now elated Napoleon. Even after the first advantage of Champaubert, he had written to his plenipotentiaries at Châtillon to take a prouder attitude. Now, as he approached the Austrians, an officer of their army advanced to propose an armistice, and press the acceptance of the conditions of Châtillon. Napoleon, victorious, returned for answer that he was willing to accede to those of Frankfort; but Belgium he would not cede. "Recollect," said he, "that I am nearer to Munich than my foes to Paris."

Now took place the combat of Montereau. Schwarzenberg's advanced guard of Austrian and Würtemberg troops occupied it, and defended a position in advance of the bridge. On the 17th they were driven from this; but Victor, duke of Belluno, rendered inactive by age, or by the loss of his son-in-law, a general officer slain in the morning, failed to support the attack of the bridge. Napoleon was grievously offended with Victor for his remissness, and deprived him of his command, which he gave to Gérard. Victor confessed his fault, and was generous enough not to desert or retort upon his master in the decline of his fortune. "I will take a musket," said the marshal, distressed even to tears. Napoleon himself was touched by the appeal: he embraced his lieutenant, and gave him another command.[a]

The cannon-balls rebounded on the frozen ground, and dismounted the guns of the guards. Napoleon was on foot in the midst of this park; in vain was he told that the danger was great — the grapeshot touched his boots, the veteran gunners and artillery-men were furious with him, and said with their soldierly familiarity, "Your place is not here." Napoleon answered

smilingly, "There, there, my brave fellows — the bullet that will kill me is not yet cast!" Protected by the artillery of the guard, the infantry and cavalry flung themselves into Montereau, and the Würtemberg troops were cut to pieces in the narrow streets. Victory, then, once more Victory!

The battle of Montereau, a great day for Napoleon, was dearly purchased; the more the emperor exposed himself, the more ill-tempered, imperious, and exacting he became; he reproached everyone, for he did not spare himself. Duties were no longer performed with alacrity, ardour in the ranks was no longer what it had been; a certain general, formerly brave and daring, had badly executed a cavalry manœuvre; the Cossacks had seized some ordnance of the guard under the orders of General Guyot; at Montereau, Napoleon reproached General Digeon for allowing the artillery of the guard to lack bullets; Montbrun had permitted the Cossacks to seize the forest of Fontainebleau; Marshal Victor was not speedy enough in reaching the bridge of Montereau. Napoleon exacted great things because he himself performed them; misfortune had made him gloomy — he, the great magician, demanded more than miracles; he felt the need of a young army, of reconstructing it upon new foundations; the marshals were growing weary; only Mortier and Marmont were still in his confidence; Ney was becoming insubordinate and ill-tempered, Oudinot was covered with wounds and losing his activity; Victor was riddled with bullets; — they were in need of rest. Mortier and Marmont possessed his whole confidence; he cast his eyes over the young generals whom he wished to raise to the rank of marshal of France — Bertrand, Gérard, Bourmont, and Maison, all of incontestable ability. It was a happy idea to raise the tone of the personnel of his camps. *j*

On the 23rd of February the French, following up the advantage of Montereau, re-entered Troyes. Some royalists had displayed their opinions in this town: one unfortunate gentleman was executed on this account. At Troyes came another flag of truce from the Austrians, wishing to establish an armistice. Napoleon would not hear of any that did not extend upon the whole line. Blücher, the beaten Blücher, appeared in the field again with a fresh army of 100,000 men, made up of reinforcements and reserves. He pressed Schwarzenberg to join him in giving battle: the Austrian persisted in retreating. Blücher then, with unexampled hardihood, resolved to renew the very attempt which had proved so destructive to him, *viz.*, to advance again towards the capital. He now chose another road, and other allies. Leaving Schwarzenberg and his Austrians to operate by themselves to the south of Paris, Blücher crossed the Marne, and drew near to the Prussian and Russian army of Bülow and Wintzingerode. With these he hoped to force his way towards the French capital, northward of the Marne.

Against this new manœuvre Napoleon was called to provide. The emperor now marched across the Marne, hoping once more to surprise Blücher. The Prussian, more wary this time, retreated opportunely to Soissons, which the Russians had already taken. Napoleon crossed the Aisne after them, and came up with the Russians, who occupied the heights of Craonne. The battle was fought on the morrow, the 6th of March. The Russians held their ground against the most furious and valiant attacks during the entire day, and then retreated in good order to Laon, where the Prussians united with them. The result, however it might claim to be called victory, was, in Napoleon's critical situation, a defeat. He had lost thousands, henceforth irreparable, and had merely repulsed the foe. Blücher, by adopting this mode of warfare, which had so well succeeded with the English in Portugal and Spain, *viz.*, taking up positions on eminences, and there awaiting the attack, now

paralysed all the efforts of his impetuous foe. Another battle, similar to Craonne, took place not far from it, at Laon, three days after. Marmont, commanding the French left, advanced too far, was surprised by Blücher, and his whole wing routed and destroyed.

Here vanished Napoleon's last hopes of superiority and retrieval. He instantly despatched word to Caulaincourt to treat on any terms with the allies; but the message arrived too late. Austria, by a treaty concluded on the 1st of March, had agreed to join the allies in inexorable war with Napoleon, should he not consent to their conditions, and the negotiations were closed. The French were on all sides driven back upon their capital.

Disasters now thickened upon the doomed Napoleon — doomed indeed by his own obstinacy as much as by fate. The successes of Wellington enabled Bordeaux to display its royalism and attachment to the Bourbons. Talleyrand had grasped at the first chance of overthrowing him whom he rightly considered as a despot, and of establishing a constitutional government under the Bourbons. The leanings of Austria in favour of the wife and family of Napoleon were overcome, and the vague inclinations of Alexander were fixed in favour of the long-exiled race of French monarchs.

In the meantime Bonaparte, like the stag at bay, had turned from Blücher to Schwarzenberg; who, in his absence, had recovered the ground lost subsequent to the affair at Montereau. The emperor, to check him, fought his last battle on the 20th of March, at Arcis, where his troops, wearied and disheartened, at length gave up, and lost their long-supported energy and victory together. Napoleon now refused to retreat to his capital, but resolved to fling himself in the rear of his enemies, fall upon their straggling parties, cut off their communications, and distract them, if possible, from Paris. He liked the confusion consequent upon these audacious and anomalous manœuvres, which disturbed his enemies in their plans and calculations, and which afforded him the best chance of advantage. Sallying therefore eastward, betwixt the Aube and the Marne, Napoleon reached St. Dizier with a portion of his army. The divisions of Mortier and Marmont were ordered to join him; but these, intercepted by the allies, who did not allow their advance on Paris to be interrupted, were driven back upon the capital.

On Sunday, the 27th of March, the inhabitants heard the sound of war approach. The roar of cannon was in the direction of Meaux; and these portents were followed by the marshalling of national guards, the crowding in of frighted peasants, wounded and straggling soldiers. The gay boulevards were soon converted into a long bivouac. Terror and incertitude were in most countenances, indignant sorrow in some, joy in few. Marshals Marmont and Mortier had posted their scanty force round Paris, and scarcely removed from its frail walls, except where the heights of Montmartre and Belleville and the castle of Vincennes offered advantages of ground or support. Within the walls Joseph Bonaparte held the command. The empress, an amiable and affectionate wife, was not a heroine, and now fled with her son from the menaced scene of strife. The boy, it is said, showed extreme reluctance to depart. Joseph, on his part, showed a degree of confidence. It was hoped that the enemy were not in force, that Napoleon might arrive with aid. Prolonged defence was impossible; and a firm attitude was preserved merely lest any advantages, that time or the emperor could bring, might be lost.

On the 30th the allied troops commenced the attack of the several heights; but, the Prussians not having come up in sufficient force on the right, the brunt of the battle was on the heights of Belleville and at Pantin,

where the small number of French made a gallant resistance, but were, in the end, overpowered. The young pupils of the Polytechnic school plied the guns; and many perished in this their first essay of arms.[1] From the very first the sovereigns had proffered to spare the city by capitulation: it was now accepted by Marmont, who had received permission of Joseph to this effect. After the order that prince had fled. On the last day of March the emperor of Russia and the king of Prussia entered Paris in triumph at the head of their troops, welcomed with all the outward appearance of joy by the Parisians. The views of the monarchs were sufficiently evinced by their dining with Talleyrand on that day. Caulaincourt, who arrived from Napoleon, was obliged to wait for an answer.

That rejected child of fortune had found at St. Dizier that his eccentric march had failed in diverting the allies from their march upon the capital. He had made the great blunder of supposing that those generals who fought to the utmost whilst under his eye, or dreading his censure, were likely to exert themselves for victory when defeat would forever deliver them from an imperious and unfortunate master. Napoleon bent his steps back towards the capital by Troyes, and the main road of Fontainebleau. He had already passed that town, when he encountered, on the evening of the 30th, some of the troops of Marmont, retiring by virtue of the capitulation. He could scarcely credit the tidings. Joseph's flight, Marmont's surrender, seemed inexplicable to him. He persisted in advancing; and it was only by persuasion, almost amounting to force, that he was made to believe in the loss of his capital, and to return to Fontainebleau: thence he despatched Caulaincourt to Paris.[g]

NAPOLEON'S ABDICATION

Napoleon was still to be feared, for he could raise seventy thousand men, and provoke civil war. Nothing was more pressing than the need of rallying the army round the provisional government, by demonstrating to it that peace was essential, and its conclusion was entirely in its hands. Moreover, the army was worn out and demoralised, the officers were doubtful, divided, and in despair. Discipline galled them. Napoleon was treated, even in the heart of his staff, as a raving lunatic.

Caulaincourt therefore went to Fontainebleau to tell the emperor that the powers were resolved not to treat with him, and that Alexander offered him the island of Elba as a place of retirement. He found him engaged in a scheme for driving the allies out of Paris. They had divided their forces; Schwarzenberg was established on the left bank of the river with eighty thousand men; the remainder were in Paris or on the right bank. Napoleon estimated that with his seventy thousand men who would be mobilised on 4th of April, he could crush Schwarzenberg's eighty thousand, surprise the troops occupying Paris, give battle again to them and force the sovereigns to a compromise. On the 4th he addressed the soldiers to this effect, to the amazement of the staff. Lefebvre, Ney, Oudinot, and Macdonald, respectful but incensed, above all at the idea of a battle in Paris, repenting like the senate of their prolonged compliance, at last yielded to solicitations which beset them on all hands. They entered the emperor's room, and revealed the true situation of affairs in regard to which he was deceived, and asserted that they were no longer able to count on the discipline of the troops. Napoleon bade them withdraw, and immediately drew up a state-

[1 The total loss according to Dareste[k] was 6,000.]

ment declaring that "having been proclaimed by the powers the only obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe; true to his principles, he was ready to relinquish the throne, to leave France and even give up his life for the country, inseparable from his son's rights and those of the regency, the empress and the laws of the empire."

Ney and Macdonald undertook to take this document to Alexander, and plead the king of Rome's cause to him, which it seemed to them would reconcile their fidelity and the exigencies of the situation. During this time, Marmont, whose corps was camped on the Essonne and covering Fontainebleau, yielded to pressing solicitations, and allowed himself to be persuaded that he was called upon to play a military part equal to the political rôle of Talleyrand. He entered into negotiations with Schwarzenberg. His generals of division, incensed against Napoleon, and accusing him of being willing to let his last soldier be killed, refused to obey an order summoning them to Fontainebleau, led the 6th army corps to Versailles, and left the Essonne unprotected.

This movement was not carried through without protest and complaint. A military plot was feared, for officers and soldiers, influenced by different feelings, were speculating as to what they ought to do. Marmont, who was in Paris, returned to them, and controlled them.

Ney, Macdonald, and Caulaincourt, having obtained no concession from the sovereigns, returned and informed Napoleon that a simple abdication was insisted upon. Napoleon had disguised his expectation of it. He took Caulaincourt aside, and declared that he could prolong the war from the other side of the Loire, but that it would mean to turn a foreign into a civil war, and so he was resolved to abdicate. Realising the truth, he spoke of himself, of his generals, and of France with the clear insight and calm of fixed resolution. He asked only for conditions on behalf of the army and of France. He wanted even now an improved frontier. Caulaincourt pointed out that such a wish was useless, since they refused to make terms with him; so he called his marshals together and read them an act of simple abdication.

Since the flight of the government and the proclamation of its downfall, recriminations broke out. Napoleon was the object of the most unheard-of passion. It was one unanimous howl against the "Corsican Ogre," the assassin of the duke d'Enghien, the author of the ambuscade at Bayonne, the man who had slaughtered so many thousands of men, and who, it was said, reserved for Paris, in wishing to attempt a battle within its walls, the fate of Moscow.

The excitement was at its height and the reaction unrestrained. The fallen idol was, as always, despised and insulted. The statue on the Austerlitz column was thrown down. And as every revolution has its vile side, there were not wanting those ready to flatter the sovereigns and even the émigrés who had served in the foreign armies. Another, but more natural movement, was the sudden enthusiasm for the cause of the princes. Each day it was felt more forcibly that the Bourbons were necessary, that they alone could reconcile France with the rest of Europe and restore her liberty. It is better, as Meaux[l] has rightly said, to bow before a principle than before a master.

The sovereigns signed, on the 11th, a treaty with Napoleon, by which they gave him the island of Elba and an income of two millions for himself, and two more for his family. To Marie Louise and her son, the duchies of Parma and Plaisance were given.[k]

HENRI MARTIN ON NAPOLEON'S ABDICATION

Ney adhered to the new government as the majority of marshals, ministers, and officials of all kinds had already done. Caulaincourt and Macdonald declared that their duty towards Napoleon would not be accomplished until after the fulfilment of the conditions which had just been signed, and they returned to Fontainebleau which was becoming more and more deserted. The important personages of the army had left one after the other to carry their adherence to the new power. The conduct of Macdonald contrasted so much the more nobly with that of the men who owed their fortune to Napoleon, because the emperor did not like him and had put him aside. Napoleon, who had so little faith in disinterestedness and virtue, was touched as much as he could be by their unexpected generosity. He thanked Macdonald and at the same time offered him as a souvenir his Egyptian sword given him by Murad Bey on the banks of the Nile.

Napoleon had an interview that evening with Caulaincourt, who carried away lasting recollections of it. His language was of a surprising grandeur. He concentrated upon it all the forces of his genius to rise above the history of his time, and to judge men and things impartially. He posed before posterity as he wished to appear to it, perhaps with that kind of sincerity great actors possess when they put themselves into rôles. He made an effort to convince the sole auditor charged with conveying his words to the world, and he made an effort also perhaps to convince himself that he had acted only in the interests of France. He repeated this expression which had already escaped him once before; he repeated it with real and profound agony—"Ah, to leave France so little, after having received her so great!" What more could one add! It is the sentence of the 18th Brumaire pronounced by its author.

It was a solemn farewell to life which the fallen emperor had intended to make. He had always believed in destiny rather than in providence. Destiny had pronounced against him. He had none of those religious principles which forbid a man to take leave of life before God calls him. He dismissed Caulaincourt and swallowed a potion of opium combined with other deleterious substances. It was, it is affirmed, a similar potion to the one composed for Condorcet by Cabanis. He called back Caulaincourt, gave him instructions for his family, bade him farewell and embraced him. The death which he had summoned did not come. A violent vomiting spell saved him — unfortunately for himself and for the French. He returned to life to cause fresh troubles for France.

Resigned to living, he expected to find his wife and son on the path of exile which he was about to tread. He had previously made Marie Louise promise to seek an interview with the emperor, her father, in the hope that Francis I would give her Tuscany instead of Parma. Marie Louise accordingly went to see Francis I at Rambouillet; but she did not obtain Tuscany and her father persuaded her to leave for Vienna with her son instead of rejoining her husband during his dreary journey across France. She was made to believe that she could join him later on the island of Elba. Marie Louise, incapable of thinking and deciding herself, obeyed her father as she would have obeyed her husband. Napoleon never again saw either his wife or his son.

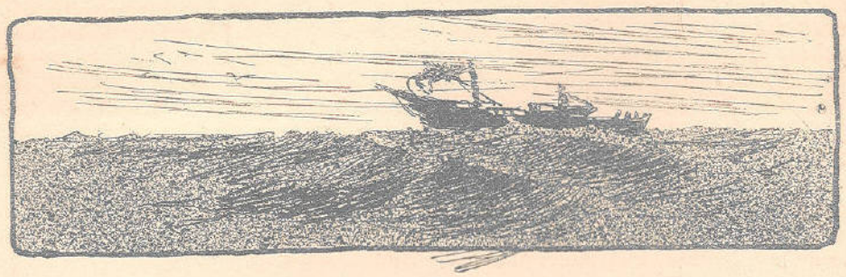
On the 20th of April, everything being ready for the departure of Napoleon, and the commissioners of the four great powers who were to accompany him having arrived, Napoleon assembled the national guard

in a circle in the court of honour at the château of Fontainebleau and addressed to them his farewells. "Soldiers," said he, "one mission is left to me, and it is to fulfil that that I consent to live. It is to relate to posterity the great things which we have done together." Would to God that he had kept his word and had done nothing else! He kissed the flag of the old guard. These brave soldiers, who saw in him only the man who had led them so many times to victory, burst into tears. Seven or eight hundred of them were to form the army left to the man who had disposed of a million soldiers, the army of the sovereign of Elba. They had left in advance and Napoleon started without other escort than the generals Drouot and Bertrand, and the four foreign commissioners with their suites.

In the first departments they traversed, from the Seine-et-Marne to Allier, the people who had seen the invasion from close at hand forgot the evil Napoleon had done, and saw in him only the defender of the land. They cried: "*Vive l'empereur!* Down with the strangers!" Beyond Lyons where the people had not seen the enemy the population became hostile. The old royalist and Catholic passions were aroused in proportion as they advanced towards the south, the crowd cried: "*Vive le roi!* Down with the tyrant!" Some groups screamed, "*Vivent les alliés!*" At Avignon and at Orgon, a furious populace assailed the carriages, clamouring to have the tyrant delivered up to them to hang or to throw into the Rhone. This man, who had lived with indifference in the midst of bullets and balls, quailed before these ignoble perils. He masqueraded in a foreign uniform and without this disguise the commissioners of the allies could not perhaps have succeeded in saving his life at Orgon.

This sad journey ended at the gulf of St. Raphael on the coast of Provence — at Fréjus, precisely the same point where General Bonaparte had landed on his return from Egypt. An English frigate was waiting for him and carried him to the isle of Elba. He landed the 4th of May at the port of Porto Ferrajo.

While the empire was completing its ruin at Essonne and at Fontainebleau, and the fallen emperor was on his way into exile, the new government was working laboriously at the task of establishing itself at Paris.[b]



CHAPTER XXII

THE END OF NAPOLEON

[1814–1815 A.D.]

> War is the condition of this world. From man to the smallest insect all are at strife, and the glory of arms, which cannot be obtained without the exercise of honour, fortitude, courage, obedience, modesty, and temperance, excites the brave man's patriotism and is a chastening corrective for the rich man's pride. It is yet no security for power. Napoleon, the greatest man of whom history makes mention — Napoleon, the most wonderful commander, the most sagacious politician, the most profound statesman, lost by arms Poland, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and France. Fortune, that name for the unknown combinations of infinite power, was wanting to him, and without her aid the designs of man are as bubbles on a troubled ocean. — NAPIER.[b]

ROYALISM was struggling with the party representing national sovereignty in the commission charged by the senate with preparing a constitution. The abbé de Montesquiou, the confidential man of the pretendant, did not succeed in causing the principle of a sovereign right superior to the will of the nation to be admitted. The formula adopted was the following: "The French people voluntarily calls to the throne of France, Louis Stanislas Xavier of France, brother of the last king, and, after him the members of the house of Bourbon."

The reign was not to commence until the day when he took oath to the constitution. Executive power was conferred on the king, who shared the legislative power with the senate and a chamber of deputies. The constitution sanctioned individual freedom, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, the sale of national lands, the public debt, and proclaimed forgetfulness of all acts committed since the commencement of the Revolution. The principles of '89 were preserved; in the sad position in which France was placed there was no better course than to rally around this constitution which was voted by the senate on the 6th of April and accepted by the legislative body.

The bourgeoisie received the prince well and he was gracious to them. He was conducted to Notre Dame, then to the Tuileries. It had been twenty-two years since his unfortunate brother Louis XVI had made his exit, and twenty-five since he himself had fled from France after the taking of the Bastille. Talleyrand and his circle feared that the public might remember

[1814 A.D.]

the counter-revolutionary ardour of the prince who had been the leader of the émigrés. They thought it necessary to give some pledge that the old régime would not be brought back and in the *Moniteur* of the next day a happy expression was attributed to the count of Artois: "Nothing is changed in France, there is only one Frenchman more!" The count of Artois did not disown this invention of a clever man, the count Beugnot, but he held firmly to his desire of being recognised unconditionally as lieutenant-general of the kingdom just as he had entered Paris unconditionally. The emperor of Russia intervened and signified to the count of Artois that the allies were pledged to the senate and to the nation. The count of Artois had to yield.

LOUIS GABRIEL SUCHET
(1770–1826)

The national tricolour cockade, at the moment when it was being abandoned in Paris for the white, was still honoured by numerous French soldiers from the banks of the Garonne to those of the Elbe and many deeds of war distinguished the last efforts of French arms even after Napoleon had laid down his sword. Carnot, at Antwerp, had shielded the city and fleet from the attacks of the English. At Bergen-op-Zoom the English lost 4,000 men in an attack which for them resulted in disaster. The allies were also rudely driven back at Maubeuge. Suchet, obliged by Napoleon to send the best part of his forces against Lyons, had re-entered France with the rest, trying to rejoin Soult. The latter had retreated upon Toulouse with 36,000 men, followed by Wellington, who had 60,000. Towards evening he abandoned Toulouse and retired on Carcassonne where he was certain of being rejoined by Suchet. An emissary of the provisional government finally arrived, too late to prevent the carnage of Toulouse; but too early in the opinion of the old French soldiers of Spain, who were hoping for a revenge.

The armistice was gradually established everywhere: it was now a question of fixing the conditions of peace. They were sure to be grievous in any case.

Talleyrand, the sceptical egotist who held the direction of foreign affairs in his hands, thought only of making himself popular for a few days by concluding as quickly as possible an agreement for the departure of the foreigners. He had a compact signed by the count of Artois on the 23rd of April, in accordance with which "all hostilities on land or sea were suspended between the allied powers and France," until the treaty of peace, which should be concluded as soon as possible. The foreign powers promised to leave French territory as it had been the 1st of January, 1792, as soon as the places without these limits still occupied by French troops should be

evacuated and returned to the allies. The total restoration of these places was to be effected by the 1st of June.

On seeing the feebleness and incapacity of the count of Artois from near at hand, everybody was looking forward to the arrival of the new king, in whom people tried to hope. On the 20th of April he left his retreat at Hartwell in the environs of London, where he had resided since he had left Russia, and made a solemn entry into London. The English, intoxicated with pride at having overturned Napoleon and having made a king of France, welcomed him with the white cockade in their hats. The new king, escorted by an English squadron, crossed that strait which Napoleon had for so long dreamed of crossing at the head of a victorious French fleet. He landed at Calais, the 24th of April, and was received with the acclamations which always greet a new power and which the satisfaction over a return to peace at that moment made sincere. From there he proceeded slowly to Paris.[c]

THE RETURN AND MISTAKES OF THE BOURBONS

The Parisians were somewhat disappointed when they saw in the person of their legitimate king an old man of prodigious obesity, with heavy brooding features and perpetual gout. Sitting by his side, however, was another resuscitation of the past, which awoke more painful feelings still. It was the duchess d'Angoulême, the unfortunate daughter of Louis XVI, and so long a prisoner in the Temple. She now advanced with withered countenance along the same road, covered with arches of triumph, leading to the Tuileries, over which her mother had been so pitilessly dragged to the scaffold. Now old names began to be heard again which had had a great sound before the Revolution, the possessors of which were only bent on making up, by insolence and superiority, for their humble position and scanty fare in Leicester square and other haunts of expatriated men. More respectable while submitting to their fate, and teaching languages or dancing to the citizens of London or Vienna, than when they tried to exert their ancient privileges over a people who had ceased to remember the old order of affairs, they quickly converted the compassion their protectors had felt for their sufferings into dislike. They reclaimed estates which had passed through great numbers of hands since they were confiscated in 1793. Houses had been built upon their lands, canals dug between their villages; rents had been paid to the intrusive proprietors, and Monsieur le Marquis would not be satisfied without a full and free restoration of all he had been defrauded of so long. And Louis XVIII was scarcely in a position to resist his claims, for he himself was playing, on a still greater scale, the same game.[d]

The new monarch — who called himself "king by the grace of God"[1] without making mention of the national will, who tore down the tricolour flag to replace it by the white flag which the French soldiers no longer recognised, who finally dated his accession from the death of his nephew, Louis XVII, and who called 1814 the nineteenth year of his reign — was but little disposed to make concessions. The czar did not love the Bourbons and already realised that the revolutions of France would not be finished nor the east of Europe established except by liberal institutions strong

[1 The legal title with which Louis ascended the throne is very contradictory. "Through God's grace he became king of France and Navarre" — "by the love of the people he was recalled to the throne." The word of the Russian Alexander was proved good when he said that "the Bourbons did not improve themselves and could not be improved," or in other terms that they forgot nothing and learned nothing. — KAISER.*f*]

enough to render impossible the return of the old régime. He sustained the constitutional proposals drawn up by Talleyrand and the commission of senators and deputies. The king was obliged before entering Paris to make the declaration of St. Ouen, May 2nd, which promised a representative government and the maintenance of the first conquests of the Revolution. This declaration was replaced by the constitutional charter, "taken under advisement" May 27th, and "conceded" on the 4th of June.

These are its principal clauses: an hereditary royalty; two chambers, one electoral, the other — that of the peers — chosen by the king, both chambers having the vote on taxation and the discussion of laws; public and individual liberty; liberty of the press and of religion; the inviolability of property, even of the national properties that had been sold; responsibility of ministers; the permanence of the judges; the guaranty of the public debt; the maintenance of the pensions, ranks, and military honours of the old and of the new nobility, as well as of the Legion of Honour, whose cross should bear the image of Henry IV in place of that of Napoleon; the free admissibility of all Frenchmen to all offices, civil and military; the maintenance of the great institutions of the empire.

The czar Alexander had been unwilling to depart before the constitutional act was drawn up. When he knew it to be adopted, he and his allies signed the treaty of peace on the conditions accepted by Talleyrand, April 23rd, and the evacuation of France by the hostile troops began May 30th.

The charter specified the middle class. Since the empire had fallen, it was consoled for the glory and the power that had been lost by the hope of at least having found peace and freedom. But with the Bourbons came back the émigrés, who threatened the new interests gained by the Revolution. For minister of war General Dupont was chosen, though his name was attached to the disgrace of the first reverse, the capitulation of Baylen. Public honours were rendered to the memory of George Cadoudal and of Moreau, both notoriously culpable, the one for an attempt at assassination, the other for treason. The king closed his ordinances with the old formula of Louis XIV: "Since this is our good pleasure." Ranks and honours were lavished upon the émigrés, while 14,000 officers who had gained their epaulettes in the face of the enemy were reduced to half pay. Soldiers of the army of Condé and even men who had never worn a sword were made generals. Officers of the marine were restored with the rank immediately above that they had held the day of their emigration. Those who had served on the British fleet kept the rank which the English admiralty had given them. Campaigns of war made against France counted as "vacation" (ordinances of May 25th).[e]

One of the great errors of the Bourbons, an error that even the catastrophe of 1815 could not cure them of, was a belief in the existence of a numerous and powerful party that had never ceased to desire their return or to work efficaciously for it. These illusions might have been sanctified by history itself if the Bourbons had known how to reign and to justify, even imperfectly, public confidence. But this confidence soon took flight. Each day was marked by a fresh mistake. To make a clean sweep of the workers and works of the Revolution, to restore, as the saying was, "the continuity of the ages, interrupted by unhappy digressions," that is to say, to reconstruct, or rather parody the old régime — such was from the very beginning the ostensible and almost openly avowed aim of the ministers of Louis XVIII, and of the princes of his house, whom no law limited from meddling in the affairs of the state.

The barely promulgated charter was violated in its most essential principles. It guaranteed liberty to all religious cults, but as early as June 7th a famous law forbade Sunday labour. It granted liberty of the press, but the first law framed by the ministry re-established a censorship. Public irritation and mistrust came to a head at the spectacle of a cabinet minister, Ferrand, confirming all the fears which, with blind and culpable recklessness, were kept alive in the numerous body of purchasers of the national properties.

Four months from the date of the restoration of the Bourbons the evil done was almost irreparable. Public opinion had nothing to feed on but the unconstitutional acts of authority. The very army, for which sheer common sense claimed consideration — the army, still wet with its own blood and the blood of its enemies, was subjected to contemptible insults. It seemed as though men desired by dishonouring the army to dishonour not the emperor's person and reign alone, but the Revolution and the whole of new France. The reorganisation of the Hundred Swiss was a yet graver error. It seemed like a distinct and menacing protest against the Revolution. The charter having safeguarded the Legion of Honour, everything possible was done to bring discredit on that noble institution which committed the unpardonable sin of dating from the imperial régime. Princes and ministers gave away the honour wholesale.

THE GROWTH OF OPPOSITION

It was inevitable that such an accumulation of imprudences should sooner or later react on the contrivers. Weary as France was of wars and revolts, she could not suffer dishonour thus at the hands of debilitated and unreasonable authority which, existing only by virtue of its compromise with the spirit of the Revolution, seemed to deny that compromise and to lean solely on a clique of men with retrograde notions, intrepid only in insulting a past they had not known how either to appease or to resist. As early as the month of September everything was ripe for a revolution.*g*

The Napoleonic legend dates from this epoch. Constitutionals, liberals, carbonari, freemasons, the débris of the republic becoming the débris of the empire, the participators in the Hundred-Days, dismissed royalists, Orleanists — every party aided in its construction. There was no longer any question of the administrative despotism under which France had groaned, of the harvests of men mown down each year on all the fields of Europe, of the egotistical and unrestrained policy whose deceptions and mistakes were paid so dearly by the blood and treasure of France. Separated from the empire by an abyss, these platonic partisans set their hero upon a mighty pedestal; he became the modern Cæsar, the god of victory, Prometheus on his rock. The exaggerations of poetry became the daily language of controversy.

What was Bonapartism at this time? Barely a dream. The emperor was far away, his son, a child, languished under the guardianship of Austria; his brothers had neither partisans nor personal influence; the powers would not have tolerated a member of the Bonaparte family on the throne of France, not even Prince Eugène, although he was allied to one of the courts of the north. Still more, among so many people who glorified the empire, how many were really attached to it by recollection or office? The empire, set up again, would have scattered them, or, perhaps, they would not even have come forward to share in its power and honours. For the greater part, Bonapartism was only an instrument of opposition.*h*

A nation still heaving with so great a storm, with people embittered by the animosity of five-and-twenty years, with so many injuries to avenge on both sides, and such a total prostration of dignity and honour as the rapid alternation of success and defeat had produced, found it impossible to fulfil the conditions of the compact it had made between the past and the present. It could not satisfy the disinherited seigneur, nor dispossess the roturier of his lately purchased estate. "Seigneur," indeed, and "roturier," had lost their signification, but not their recollections. The seigneur remembered his rights and immunities — his donjon keep and gilded chair at court; the roturier, within a month of the publication of the charter, began to remember the little man in the gray riding-coat who had kept those harpies so gallantly from the land, and scowled with ill-concealed hatred as he saw the tents of the Tatars and Croats pitched all down the beautiful avenues of the Champs Élysées, and met long trains of priests and bishops going to return thanks to God for the humiliation of their country. Priests and bishops were busy in all directions. Over every death-bed hung a priest denouncing endless woes unless the sufferer restored his secularised lands to the church, or his government-guaranteed lands to their legitimate owners the refugees.

All this time there was an immense army of the allies to be maintained at France's cost, and an enormous war-contribution to indemnify the invaders against the expenses of their campaign. The taxes from ordinary sources were dried up; there was little commerce, and agriculture had come to a standstill from the uncertainty of political events. The returned exiles had no money, and the whole burden fell on the comparatively opulent middle class, who had saved some hard coin, and were now forced to bring it out from their depositories under the thatch or in the dry well of the orchard, and pour it into commissioners' hands for the enrichment of Prussians and Muscovites. Very slight were the hopes of amelioration from the congress which commenced its sittings at Vienna. There, scissors in hand, sat the delegates of the allied sovereigns, ready to clip off bits of territory, and round the national maps to their own satisfaction.

Meanwhile a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers had returned to France: two hundred thousand more were scattered through the villages and farms. They found their fields neglected and their cottages in disrepair, but the object of their indignation was changed. They no longer blamed the conscription for the want they saw around them, but the foreigner who had trod their soil, and the wretched poltroons who, in their absence beyond the Rhine, allowed the tricolour to be trampled in the dust. "If we had been there," they said — "if the Little Corporal had had the men of Marengo and Eylau at his side, this would not have happened." And everywhere, shortly after this, there were whispers about great things that would occur when the violet appeared in the spring. Ladies wore violets in their bonnets, and little sketches were circulated, in which the figure of a violet was so disposed that the interval between the leaves formed the well-known countenance of the emperor, with his plain gray riding-coat and little cocked hat. He was talked of as "Corporal Violet"; and the tedious winter wore away.

It did not seem that the bursting forth of that pretty but common flower excited much attention in Elba. The island was guarded by English cruisers, and commissioners from various nations were resident to watch that the newly appointed monarch of the Elbese territories did not leave his domains. There appeared no wish on the part of that somewhat petty potentate to withdraw his paternal care from the empire across which he could ride in a

couple of hours; and he was busy making roads, building bridges, and calculating the expense of a better pier to his imperial city of Porto Ferrajo. His only relaxations were scientific discussions with his friends, and quiet evening-parties at the house of his sister Pauline.

NAPOLEON LEAVES ELBA

It chanced, on the 26th of February, 1815, that the ball at Pauline's was deprived of much of its usual brilliancy. The captain of the English cruiser had taken his ship for a few days to Leghorn; the commissioners of the allied powers were absent on leave or otherwise engaged; and at ten o'clock at night a small cannon discharged on the rampart did not interfere with the enjoyment of the supper that followed the dance. The report, however, had great effect in other quarters. Six hundred men of the Old Guard marched silently down to the harbour; there they were joined by four hundred Poles and Corsicans; and the whole force embarked in a brig called *The Inconstant*. Just before the sails were hoisted, the men caught sight of the gray riding-coat and cocked hat as the wearer stepped upon the deck. Not a word was said; the anchor was raised, no obstruction was offered; the little vessel left the lights of the town behind it. Three tedious days were passed upon the voyage; English frigates were swarming everywhere, and some one or two passed in sight of *The Inconstant*. At length French soil was seen, and the invading army landed in the gulf of Juan, near the town of Cannes. The few inhabitants of that district were too remote from public affairs, and too ignorant, to be much moved by the strange apparition of a thousand men disembarking from a brig from some unknown region beyond the sea.

It was only on the 8th of March that the Parisians read in the *Moniteur* that Napoleon was in France. By this time he was in Lyons at the head of a considerable army. All the forces hitherto sent to oppose him had gone over at sight of the tricolour. At Grenoble he had been met by a regiment of seven hundred men, who prepared to resist his advance. He walked slowly forward to the front line, and said, "My friends, if there is one among you who wishes to kill his emperor — his general — he has it in his power!" He unbuttoned the little gray coat to receive the ball, and shouts arose of "*Vive l'empereur!*" while he continued his march with an addition of seven hundred men. The same enthusiasm arose among the soldiers wherever he appeared — the ranks rushed into each other's arms, and the officers shook hands. Ney, "the bravest of the brave," was sent to arrest the audacious madman, and promised largely [1] before he took leave of the king; but when he came within sight of his ancient chief — when he saw the colours he had fought under, and heard the shouts of the men he had so often led to battle — above all, when he saw the sorrowful but benignant countenance of his friend and master — all his old love and reverence returned: he put his sword into its sheath, and was again the Ney of former days — the sword of France and follower of Napoleon. There was no longer either the power or the will to resist.

The congress was still pursuing its labours at Vienna; discussions were going on about the boundaries and populations of newly constituted states, when, on the 25th of March, the duke of Wellington entered the council chamber, and informed the plenipotentiaries that their work was all to do over again, for the emperor was in Paris, and the grand army as numerous and enthusiastic as ever.[d]

[1 Ney had volunteered to bring Napoleon back to Paris in a cage.]

HOW LOUIS XVIII LEFT PARIS AND NAPOLEON CAME BACK

About midnight of March 19th, in fearful weather, to the sound of wind and heavy rain, Louis XVIII, walking with difficulty and leaning on M. de Blacas and the duke de Duras, first gentleman of the chamber, descended the grand staircase of the Tuileries, by the light of torches carried before him by an usher. The bodyguards, the national guards on service in the palace, the court servants, knelt as he passed and kissed his hands, with signs of the greatest grief. He himself appeared deeply moved, and was unable to say more than, "My children, your devotion touches me, but I need rest; I shall see you again." An hour later, the count of Artois and the duke de Berri took the road to Flanders. The ministers, public functionaries, and all who thought themselves in any danger, also left during the night. The secretary of the council, Vitrolles, started for the south of France, charged with all the powers of the king. Such was the hurry of departure that Blacas left important papers in his cabinet, which were even compromising for some people. But they had remembered to take away the crown jewels.

The king had ordered the closing of the session of the chambers, charged the members to separate immediately, to reassemble as soon as possible at the place which he would indicate as the provisional seat of his government, and declared null and illegal all meetings of either chamber which should take place elsewhere without his authorisation.

The greater part of the troops had received orders to retire to St. Denis. With the exception of the Swiss regiments who went immediately, they received the announcement of this movement with signs of the greatest discontent. They had, however, started in the morning: but, at the first halt, an infantry regiment revolted, and a second soon followed the example; the other corps did not fail to imitate it. Soldiers, drunk with joy and wine, went through the streets flourishing their swords, and shouting in a manner which seemed to menace France with the odious and humiliating rule of the soldiery; at nightfall fatigue and the bad weather began to thin the ranks of this multitude without completely dispersing it. And yet Napoleon did not appear. He had been at Fontainebleau since four o'clock in the morning. At two o'clock in the afternoon he left for Paris, but the crowds of villagers who thronged the route and saluted him with acclamations, the bodies of troops, the generals who came to meet him and to whose congratulations he was forced to listen, only permitted him to advance slowly; it was eight o'clock in the evening when he entered his capital. His carriage, preceded by a group of generals, was escorted by only a hundred horsemen. He reached the Tuileries by the quays. It was only with great difficulty that he was able to cross the gates of the court, obstructed by a mass of officers and soldiers, who almost threw themselves under the horses' feet. Seized by vigorous arms, he was literally carried to the foot of the grand staircase, which he slowly mounted, with his eyes shut, his arms stretched out in front of him, like a blind man, and only expressing his happiness by a smile. He found already assembled in the throne-room with his sisters-in-law, Julie and Hortense, the wives of his brothers Joseph and Louis, several of his former ministers, his intimate servitors, the ladies of the empress' palace, and princesses, giving way to all the joy of so unexpected a return of fortune. The excitement was such that they kissed his hands and even his clothes. He himself appeared gay, moved, and excited. They say, however, that with him a certain anxiety mingled with the joy of his

triumph. The reception of the Parisians had not come up to his expectations. Tearing himself from the homage and admiration of the courtiers, he occupied himself with the formation of his ministry.[i]

THE NEW ADMINISTRATION AND A NEW WAR

In spite of the extreme rapidity and apparent facility of this revolution, France showed that it was stupefied. War was imminent, and the immediate consequence of this war would be despotism. Napoleon would always be the same; his dream of glory and ambition had become a fixed idea, and he flung to Europe a defiance more daring than those of 1813 and 1814. The coalition, the "holy alliance," still existed, and on the 13th of March the Vienna congress declared that the usurper whom it delivered over to public vengeance should be a second time overthrown. But finances, an army, fortresses — all had to be reconstructed to carry on again such a gigantic struggle.

In vain had Napoleon announced at Grenoble that he would have a representative government, and at Lyons that he did not seek conquests. Such declarations were too contrary to his own nature to be believed. His first acts before arriving in Paris were the proclamation of an amnesty, with exceptions, the dissolution of the chambers, and convocation of the electoral colleges of the departments to a *champ de mai*, this being in reality an appeal to the sovereignty of the people. Scarcely was he reinstated at the Tuileries when he constituted his ministry with Cambacérès and Maret, the inevitable Fouché, willing to serve everybody, and Carnot, who in a widely-circulated pamphlet had put himself forward as the revolutionary advocate against the Bourbons. He sequestered the goods of these latter; ordered the state council to annul the act of dethronement; abolished the old nobility; expelled all émigrés from the army, and published a list of a score of persons not included in the amnesty. In spite of this exhumation of the empire, there were few Bonapartists except those in the army.

Napoleon, who did not want to convoke a constituent assembly and who, moreover, had not time to do so, sent for Benjamin Constant, although he was a declared enemy, and charged him to draw up what he chose to call "a supplementary act to the imperial constitutions," for he did not want, any more than the Bourbons, to deny his past. Benjamin Constant applied himself to the work, and drew up a constitution both wide and liberal, conforming to the greater number of the principles of the charter. Napoleon accepted everything save an article abolishing confiscation, which he declared necessary to every government. He was anxious also, as was Louis XVIII, that the act should emanate from his will only, so as not to be fettered by wills which were foreign to him.

Finally this act was submitted to the people for sanction, and in the various mayoralties received the assent of 1,300,000 voters [against 4,206 negative votes]. The number of non-voters was very high. In fact, the public showed much indifference. Napoleon named four ministers of state to superintend parliamentary discussions, but he himself took little interest in home affairs. All his thoughts were of war. The great question was for him to conquer, for he was fully aware that as conqueror alone would he be really master.[i]

Now all Europe was hurrying to battle and besides foreign war there was civil war. The allied sovereigns in congress at Vienna declared: "Napoleon had placed himself outside the pale of civil and social relations, and as enemy and disturber of the peace of the world he is delivered to public vengeance." Thus they outlawed not only the emperor but France. "We march," they said, "to divide this impious land. It is necessary to exterminate this band of brigands called the French army. The world cannot rest in peace while there remains a French people. It must be changed into the peoples of Burgundy, of Neustria, of Aquitaine, etc. They will tear each other to pieces, but the world will be tranquil for centuries." Blücher promised the Prussian students that he would hang Napoleon.

These were the words of Brunswick in 1792 at the declaration of Pillnitz in the first coalition against France: and they excited in the eastern provinces an enthusiasm almost equal to 1792; but Napoleon did not love the revolutionary troops and moreover in some parts of the country there was lassitude, and even defiance.[1] The chamber of deputies showed an opposition that wounded Napoleon. "They want to chain the old arm of the emperor; they drive me along a path that is not mine." He felt a loss of spirit; he no longer believed in his destiny. "I had," he said, a foreboding of misfortune." None the less he displayed all his zeal; he worked sixteen hours out of the twenty-four. In fifty days an army of the line of about 182,000 men was organised. Another of 200,000 national guards mobile was prepared for defence and as reserve for the active army.

The allies had no need of such efforts; their troops were ready to take the field. Austria despatched 300,000 Germans towards the Rhine and the Alps; 170,000 Russians were due at Nuremberg towards the middle of June, at Mainz on the 1st of July. In Belgium there were already 95,000 Anglo-Dutch troops[2] under the command of Wellington, a methodical general who lacked great inspirations but who left nothing to chance; and 124,000 Prussians under Blücher, an impetuous old man whom his soldiers called Marshal "Forwards" (Marschall Vorwärts). He had most frequently been obliged to lead them to the rear; but he had just conducted them from the Oder to the Seine and he was to lead them there again. The arrival of the Russians was awaited in order to commence operations.

THE BATTLES OF QUATRE BRAS AND LIGNY

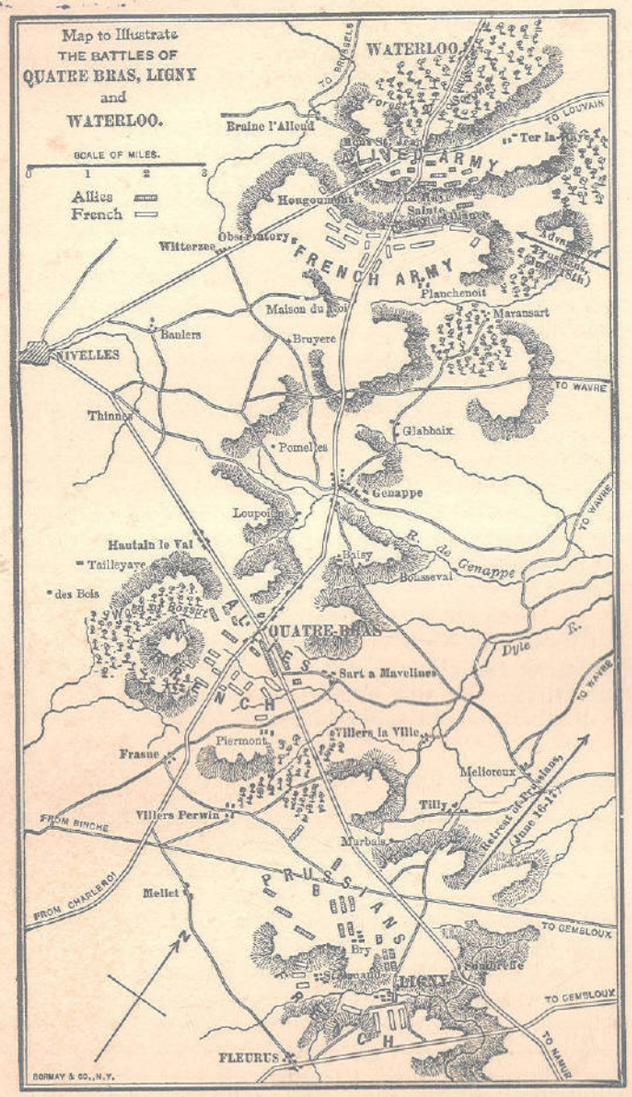
The emperor determined to forestall the enemy, the offensive seeming to him most in accordance with the genius of the French nation; above all he was loath to abandon to the ravages of the enemy the provinces of the east and north, which were showing themselves so devoted to his cause and so burning with patriotism. Besides, a great victory in Belgium might change many things. "Soldiers," he said, at the close of his proclamation to the troops, "for every Frenchman who has a heart the moment is come to conquer or die," and he crossed the Sambre with 124,000 men and 350 cannon (15th of June). He counted on surprising the Prussians; but Lieutenant-General Bourmont went over to the enemy and Blücher, warned of the peril, had time to concentrate his forces at Ligny. The French advanced in three sections: the right wing composed of 48,000 men under Marshal Grouchy; the centre of 28,000 under the immediate orders of Napoleon; the left, 48,000 men under Marshal Ney. The right and the centre went to meet the

[1 Viel-Castel shows vividly the exhaustion of France and the apathy with which Napoleon's appeals were received, none of his levies being responded to with anything approaching his expectations and many districts making no answer at all. The army he recruited was greatly exaggerated in the reports to deceive Europe; and France, calming after the first transports of joy at the exit of the Bourbons, found that, in place of King Log, she had recalled King Stork, the devourer.]

[2 There were not more than 32,700 English in the army.]

Prussian front; the left should have seized Quatre Bras in order to arrest the English, who could only debouch by that point, and then have fallen back on the Prussians to complete their rout.

But the orders having been given too late, the plan was only half executed; the English had time to establish themselves in force at Quatre Bras; and if Ney with his indomitable energy succeeded in confining them there without allowing a single one of them to come to Blücher's assistance, he could not co-operate in the attack on the Prussians. The emperor had begun a terrible action against the latter; Ligny was twice taken and retaken. One of Grouchy's lieutenants, General Gérard, nevertheless maintained himself there; and the enemy began to retreat, after having suffered considerable losses[1] but without having been destroyed as they might have been if Count D'Erlon, who commanded under Ney, had not been confused by contradictory orders and so marched his 20,000 men between Quatre Bras and Ligny, where they were equally useless to both battles (16th of June).



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE BATTLES OF QUATRE BRAS, LIGNY, AND WATERLOO

[1 Blücher himself had his horse killed under him, and fell in the middle of the French ranks, but he owed his preservation to the oncoming night, whose obscurity equally favoured his retreat. He left on the battle-field 20,000 men, 40 cannon, and 8 standards.

The French lost 6,200 men, 1,900 of whom belonged to the Gérard division. The triumph was doubtless a brilliant one; but if Napoleon's orders had been carried out by the left wing there had been an end of Blücher, and Wellington, alone, would have avoided risking a battle against victorious Napoleon. At Quatre Bras Marshal Ney displayed a firmness equal to his courage, and sustained until nightfall the terrible assaults of the English army. Wellington lost 5,000 men; Ney 4,000. That memorable 16th cost the French 10,000 dead on the two battle-fields. Bülow's corps repaired the enemy's losses; nothing could repair that of the French but a decisive victory. In the morning Marshal Ney had destroyed Blücher's right wing; in the evening he saved the French army. — DE NORVINS.*k*]

[1815 A.D.]

For the moment the Prussians seemed to have been driven back on Namur; it was time to think of the English. Napoleon marched on them on the 17th. Wellington, surprised at a ball on the 16th by the news of the approach of the French, had preserved great coolness and repaired his want of foresight by his activity. During the 16th he had assembled 32,000 men at Quatre Bras; on the 17th, in the course of a few hours, he assembled 70,000 of them before the village of Waterloo, on the plateau of Mont St. Jean. He had studied this position long beforehand. A year previously he had pointed it out in his despatches as an excellent one to cover Brussels on the side of the Sambre, because the two roads of Nivelle and Charleroi meet at the foot of this plateau and he was determined to defend himself there to the last.

Napoleon left Grouchy 34,000 men with orders to follow the Prussians in the direction of Namur. He himself with the remainder of his forces joined Ney to attack the English. The French army counted only 72,000 combatants, but they were full of enthusiasm. Wellington, with the forest of Soigne behind him and having but one way of retreat, was lost if he were not victor. It had been agreed between him and Blücher that whichever of them should find himself attacked should make a desperate resistance in order that the other might come to his aid. Wellington had only half kept his word the day of Ligny: Blücher, unhappily for the French, kept his on the day of Waterloo. The English general sent to ask for two of his corps; he answered that he would come with all. Wellington therefore counted on the Prussians; but Napoleon also calculated that the Prussians, driven towards the Maas or held back by Grouchy, would not arrive.*e*

Of all the Napoleonic campaigns this was by far the most rapid and decisive. Even the Marengo campaign had lasted a month, but this was decided in three days. Leaving Paris on the 12th, Napoleon was in Paris again on the 21st, his own fate and that of his empire and that of France decided. Everything occurred to make this short struggle the most interesting military occurrence of modern history — its desperate intensity, its complete decisiveness, the presence for the first and last time of the English army in the front of the European contest, the presence of the three most renowned commanders, Napoleon, Wellington, and Blücher. Accordingly it has been debated with infinite curiosity, and misrepresented on all sides with infinite impartiality. The battle itself was one of the most remarkable and terrible ever fought, but was perhaps on both sides rather a soldier's than a general's battle. It consisted of five distinct attacks on the English position: (1) an attack on the English right by the division Reille; (2) an attack on the left by the division D'Erlon (here Picton was killed); (3) a grand cavalry attack, where the splendid French cavalry "foamed itself away" upon the English squares; (4) a successful attack by Ney on La Haye Sainte, which Wellington is thought to have too much neglected; it was after this that the French prospects seemed brightest; (5) the charge of the guard. In the middle of the third act of this drama the Prussians began to take part in the action.*r*

VICTOR HUGO'S ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

If it had not rained the night between the 17th and the 18th of June, 1815, the future of Europe would have been changed. Certain drops of water, more or less, overthrew Napoleon. In order that Waterloo should set an end to Austerlitz, providence needed only a little rain; a cloud crossing the sky out of season sufficed for the downfall of a world. The battle of Waterloo — and this gave Blücher time to arrive — could not commence until half-past eleven. Why? Because the earth was soaked. It was necessary to wait till it grew a little firmer before the artillery could manœuvre. Napoleon was an officer of artillery and he showed the effects of it. There was something of the shooting gallery in his genius. To hammer to pieces the squares, to pulverise regiments, to break lines, to grind up and scatter masses — his way of doing this was to pound, pound, pound, unceasingly; he confided this business to the cannon-ball: a ghastly method, which joined to his genius for fifteen years kept this sombre pugilist of war invincible. The 18th of June, 1815, he counted more than ever on the artillery, since numbers were in his favour. Wellington had only 159 cannon; Napoleon had 240.

If the ground had been dry and the artillery able to roll, the action would have commenced at six in the morning, and the battle would have been gained and ended at two o'clock, three hours before the Prussian catastrophe. How much to blame was Napoleon for the loss of this battle? Is the shipwreck to be blamed on the pilot? Was the evident physical decline of Napoleon complicated at this time by a certain inward weakness? These twenty years of war, had they used up the sword as well as the sheath, the soul as well as the body? Had Napoleon lost the instinct of victory? Was he seized with a supreme folly at the age of forty-six? Was this Titanic charioteer of destiny no more than a great breakneck? We do not at all believe this. His plan of battle was, by general confession, a masterpiece; to go straight to the centre of the allies; to make an opening in the enemy; to cut him in two and push the British half on Hal and the Prussian half on Tongres; to shatter Wellington and Blücher; to carry Mont St. Jean; to hurl the German into the Rhine and the Englishman into the sea — all that was Napoleon's plan in this engagement.

Those who wish to picture neatly the battle of Waterloo have only to spread on the ground an imaginary capital A. The left leg of the A is the road to Nivelles, the right leg is the road to Genappe, the tie of the A is the sunken road from Ohain to Braine-l'Alleud. The peak of the A is Mont St. Jean; there is Wellington. The lower left tip is Hougomont; there is Reille with Jerome Bonaparte. The lower right tip is La Belle Alliance; there is Napoleon. A little below the place where the tie of the A meets and cuts the right leg is La Haye Sainte. In the middle of this tie is the exact point where the last word of the battle was spoken; it is here that they have placed a lion, symbol of the supreme heroism of the imperial guard. The triangle at the peak of the A is the plateau of Mont St. Jean; the dispute over this plateau made the whole battle. The wings of the two armies stretched right and left of the two roads from Genappe and Nivelles, D'Erlon facing Picton; Reille facing Hill. Behind the peak of the A is the forest of Soigne. As for the plain itself, imagine it a great rolling prairie; each rise dominates the following rise, and all the billows mount towards Mont St. Jean and break on the forest. The two generals had carefully studied the plain of Mont St. Jean, called to-day the plain of

THE RAVINE AT WATERLOO
(From the painting by Checu)

[1815 A.D.]

Waterloo. On this field and for the duel, Wellington had the good post, Napoleon the bad; for the English army was on the heights; the French army below.

It had rained all night, the earth was staved in by the flood; water was gathered here and there in the hollows of the plain as in basins. At certain points the gun carriages sank to the axletrees; the bellybands of the horses dripped liquid mud. If the wheat and rye borne down by this crowd of wagons had not filled the ruts and made a litter under the wheels, all movement would have been impossible. Work began late; Napoleon had the habit of holding his artillery in his hand like a pistol, aiming it now at this point, now at that, and he wished to wait till the batteries could roll and gallop freely. He must wait until the sun appeared and dried the soil. But the sun would not appear; it no longer kept the rendezvous as at Austerlitz. When the first cannon-shot was fired the English general Colville looked at his watch and noted that it was thirty-five minutes after eleven.

The battle was engaged with fury, perhaps more fury than the emperor had wished, by the left wing of the French before Hougomont. At the same time Napoleon attacked the centre by precipitating Quiot's brigade on La Haye Sainte, and Ney pushed the French right wing against the English left wing which rested on Papelotte. The attack on Hougomont was in some degree a feint to draw Wellington there and make him incline to the left; this plan would have succeeded if the four companies of the English guards and the brave Belgians of Perponcher had not solidly guarded the post and enabled Wellington instead of massing there to limit himself to sending as reinforcement four other companies of the guards and one Brunswick battalion. The attack of the French right wing on Papelotte was meant to overthrow the English left, to cut the road to Brussels, to bar the way to Prussian possibilities, to force Mont St. Jean, to crowd Wellington on Hougomont, from there on Braine-l'Alleud, thence on Hal. Nothing could be neater and, aside from certain incidents, the attack succeeded. Papelotte was taken; La Haye Sainte was carried. After this the battle vacillated.

There is in this day, from noon to four o'clock, an interval of obscurity; the middle part of the battle is nearly indistinct and shares in the blur of the mêlée. Twilight covers it. One sees vast fluctuations in this fog, a vertiginous mirage, accoutrements of war almost unknown to-day — bearskin caps with streamers, floating sabre-taches, cross-belts, cartridge-boxes for grenades, the dolmans of the hussars, red boots of a thousand wrinkles, the heavy shakos wreathed with twisted fringe, the infantry of Brunswick almost black mingled with the scarlet infantry of England, the English soldiers with great white circular pads for epaulettes, the Hanoverian lighthorse with their bands of copper and red horse-tails, the Scotch with bare knees and checkered plaids, the great white gaiters of the French grenadiers; it is pictures that we see, and not lines of battle.

In the afternoon at a certain moment the battle grows more definite. About four o'clock the situation of the English army was grave. The prince of Orange commanded the centre; Hill the right wing, Picton the left. The prince of Orange, desperate and intrepid, cried to the Hollando-Belgians: "Nassau! Brunswick! Never to the rear!" Hill worn out came to lean upon Wellington. Picton was dead.

Wellington's battle had two bases, Hougomont and La Haye Sainte. Hougomont still held out, but was burning; La Haye Sainte was taken. Of the German battalion that defended it, only forty-two survived; all the

officers except five were dead or captive. Three thousand soldiers had been massacred in that barn. A sergeant of the English guards, a champion boxer of England and thought invulnerable by his comrades, had been killed by a little French drummer-boy. Many flags had been lost. The Scots Grays no longer existed; the heavy dragoons of Ponsonby had been hacked to pieces. The valiant cavalry had gone down before the lancers of Bro and the cuirassiers of Travers; of 1,200 horses there remained 600; of 3 lieutenant-colonels, 2 were on the ground, Hamilton wounded, Mater killed. Ponsonby had fallen gashed with seven lance thrusts; Gordon was dead, Marshal was dead; two divisions, the 5th and the 6th, had been destroyed.

Hougomont invested, La Haye Sainte taken, there was only one knot, the centre. That knot always held. Wellington reinforced it; he called thither Hill who was at Merbe-Braine, he called there Chassé who was at Braine-l'Alleud. The centre of the English army, a little concave, very dense and very compact, was strongly situated. It occupied the plateau of Mont St. Jean, having behind it the village and in front of it the slope, quite steep at that time. All around the plateau the English had cut the hedges here and there, made embrasures in the hawthorns, thrust a cannon's throat between two branches, fortified the thickets. Their artillery was in ambush under brushwood. This Punic work was so well done that Haxo, sent by the emperor at nine o'clock to reconnoitre the enemy's grounds, saw nothing. It was the time when the harvest is high; on the selvage of the plateau a battalion of Kempt's brigade armed with carbines lay hidden in the tall grain. The peril of this position was the forest of Soigne. An army could not retreat without dissolving there; the artillery would have been lost in the swamps. Wellington had in hand twenty-six battalions. An enormous battery was masked by sacks of earth. Wellington had also in a hollow the dragoon guards of Somerset, 1,400 horse.

Uneasy but impassive, Wellington remained all day on his horse in the same attitude, a little in front of the old mill of Mont St. Jean, beneath an elm. He was frigidly heroic. There was a rain of bullets. The aide-de-camp Gordon fell at his side. Lord Hill, pointing to a shell that burst, said to him, "My lord, what are your instructions, and what orders do you leave us, if you are killed?" "To do as I do," answered Wellington; to Clinton he said laconically, "To hold this place to the last man." The day was plainly going wrong. Wellington cried to his old companions of Talavera, Victoria, and Salamanca, "Boys, can anyone dream of retreating? What will they think of us in England?"

Towards four o'clock the English line gave way. Suddenly nothing was seen on the plateau but the artillery and the sharp-shooters; the rest disappeared; Wellington retired. "The beginning of retreat," cried Napoleon.

The emperor had never been in such good humour as to-day. Since morning his impenetrability smiled. The man who had been sombre at Austerlitz was gay at Waterloo. At the moment when Wellington retrograded, Napoleon felt a thrill. There remained only the task of completing the retreat with destruction. Napoleon turning abruptly sent a despatch to Paris to announce that the battle was gained. Then he gave the order to the cuirassiers of Milhaud to carry the plateau of Mont St. Jean. They were 3,500. They made a front of half a mile. They were giant men on colossal horses. They had back of them for support Lefebvre-Desnouettes, the 106 picked gendarmes, the chasseurs of the guard, 1,197 men, and 880 lancers of the guard. Ney drew his sword and took the head. The enormous squadron set forward. Then was seen a formidable spectacle.

All that cavalry, sabres on high, standards and trumpets in the wind, descended with the same movement and like one single man. With the precision of a bronze battering-ram opening a breach — the hillock of La Belle Alliance — they plunged into the dreadful depth where so many men had already fallen; they disappeared in the smoke; then, issuing from that shadow, reappeared on the other side of the valley, always compact, with ranks closed, and through a cloud of grapeshot breaking over them, mounted at full trot the terrible and muddy slopes of the plateau of Mont St. Jean. They mounted, grave, menacing, imperturbable. In the interval of the musketry and artillery, that colossal trampling was heard. From afar one could believe that he saw crawling towards the crest of the plateau two great serpents of steel. They were seen through a vast smoke here and there; a pell-mell of helmets, of sabres, a tumult disciplined and terrible; and over all shone the cuirasses like the scales on the hydra.

By a strange coincidence of numbers, twenty-six battalions were to meet these twenty-six squadrons. Behind the crest of the plateau, in the shadow of the masked battery, the English infantry waited, formed in thirteen squares, two battalions to the square and in two lines, the butts of their muskets at the shoulder, and aiming at what was to come, calm, mute, immobile. They did not see the cuirassiers and the cuirassiers did not see them. They heard the mounting of that flood-tide of men. They heard the swelling thunder of the 3,000 horses; the beat alternate and symmetric of hoofs at full trot; the rattling of cuirasses, the click of sabres, and a sort of huge, wild breathing. There was a solemn silence, then suddenly a long line of arms uplifted brandishing sabres appeared above the crest, and then came the helmets, and the trumpets, and the standards, and three thousand gray-moustached faces crying "*Vive l'empereur!*" The whole cavalry rolled along the plateau; and it was like the coming of an earthquake.

Abruptly a tragedy: at the left of the English the head of the column of cuirassiers reared with fearful clamour. Come to the peak of the crest in a frenzy amidst all their fury and their charge of extermination on the squares and cannon, the cavalry saw, between them and the English, a ditch. It was the sunken road of Ohain. The moment was appalling. The ravine was there, all unexpected, yawning perpendicular beneath the hoofs of the horses. It was thirteen feet between the two embankments. The second rank shoved in the first, and the third the second; the horses rose upright, threw themselves back, fell on their haunches, sliddered, all fours in air, crushing and overwhelming their riders. There was no means of escape; for the whole column was nothing but a projectile; and the impetus acquired to destroy the English destroyed the French. The inexorable ravine could only be conquered when filled; and horsemen and horse rolled into it pell-mell, grinding on one another and forming but one flesh in the pit. When the ditch was full of living men, the rest marched over and passed on. Almost a third of the Dubois brigade sank in that abyss, and this began the loss of the day.

Was it possible that Napoleon should gain this battle? We answer No. Why? Because of Wellington? Because of Blücher? No. Because of God. Bonaparte victor at Waterloo — that was no longer according to the law of the nineteenth century. Another series of events was preparing, wherein Napoleon had no further place. The too great heaviness of this man in human destiny troubled the balance. The moment was come for the incorruptible supreme equity to take counsel. Doubtless the principles

and the elements whereon depend the regular gravity of the moral, as of the material order, complained. The blood that smoked, the overplus of the graveyards, the mothers in tears, these are redoubtable pleaders. When the earth suffers a surcharge, there rise mysterious groanings in the dark, which even the very abysm understands.

Napoleon had been denounced in the infinite and his downfall was resolved. He bothered God. Waterloo is not a battle; it is the universe changing front.

At the same moment with the ravine, the English battery was unmasked, sixty cannons and the thirteen squares thunder-smote the cavalry men point-blank. All the flying artillery of the English had galloped into the squares, but the cuirassiers had not even time to pause. The disaster of the sunken road had decimated but not discouraged them, for they were of the sort that, diminished in number, are enlarged of heart. The cuirassiers rolled down on the English squares — at full speed, bridles flying, sabres in their teeth, pistols in their fists; thus they attacked. There are moments in battle when the soul so hardens the man that it changes the soldier to a statue, and flesh to granite.

The English battalions, though desperately assailed, did not budge. Then it was frightful. All the faces of the English squares were attacked at the same time. A frenzied whirlwind enveloped them: that cold infantry rested impassive; the first rank, kneeling on the ground, received the cuirassiers on their bayonets; the second rank fired on them; behind the second rank the cannoneers charged the guns; the front of the square opened to let pass an eruption of grapeshot, and closed again.

The cuirassiers answered destruction with destruction. Their great horses reared, bestrode the ranks, leaped across the bayonets, and fell gigantic in the midst of those four living walls. The squares were no longer battalions, they were craters; these cuirassiers were no more a cavalry, they were a tempest. Each square was a volcano assailed by a cloud. Lava fought lightning.

The square on the extreme right, the most exposed of all and unsupported, was almost annihilated at the first shock. It was formed of the 75th regiment of Highlanders. The bagpiper in the centre, while ruin went on about him, was in a profound oblivion; seated on a drum, he lowered his melancholy eyes full of the reflections of forests and of lakes; on the bagpipe under his arm, he played the tunes of the mountains. These Scotchmen died musing on Ben Lothian, as the Greeks remembering Argos. The sabre of a cuirassier, cutting down the bagpipe and the arm which carried it, ended the song by killing the singer.

The cuirassiers, relatively few in numbers and diminished by the catastrophe of the ravine, had almost the entire English army against them; but they multiplied themselves, each man equalling ten. Meanwhile some Hanoverian battalions yielded. Wellington saw this and thought of his cavalry. Had Napoleon at the same moment remembered the infantry he would have gained the battle. That negligence was his grand and fatal mistake. Of a sudden the cuirassiers assailing felt themselves assailed, for the English cavalry was at their back. Before them the squares, behind them Somerset. Somerset had 1,400 dragoon guards. Somerset had at his right Dornberg with his German lighthorse, at his left Trip with his Belgian carbineers. The cuirassiers, attacked in flank and in head, front and rear, by infantry and by cavalry, must face in every direction. What mattered that to them? They were a hurricane; their bravery grew inexpressible. Besides, they

had behind them the battery always thundering; only thus could those men be wounded in the back. For such Frenchmen it needed nothing less than such Englishmen.

It was no longer a mêlée now, it was a mystery, a fury of souls and of ecurages, a cyclone of sworded lightnings. In an instant the 1,400 dragoon guards were only 800. The plateau of Mont St. Jean was taken, retaken, and taken again, but the squares still held firm. There were a dozen assaults, Ney had four horses killed under him and half of the cuirassiers were on the ground. This struggle lasted two hours.

The English army was profoundly shaken. No doubt if the cuirassiers had not been weakened in their first charge by the disaster of the sunken road, they would have overthrown the centre and decided the victory. They had annihilated seven squares out of thirteen and captured six flags which three cuirassiers and three chasseurs of the guard carried to the emperor at the farm of La Belle Alliance. Wellington felt himself tottering; the crisis was near. And the enfeeblement of the English seemed irremediable. The hemorrhage of that army was horrible. Kempt on the left wing cried out for reinforcements. "There are none," Wellington answered. "Let him die at his post." Almost at the same moment, by a singular coincidence that paints the exhaustion of the two armies, Ney demanded infantry of Napoleon, and Napoleon exclaimed, "Infantry? Where does he want me to get it, does he want me to make it?" Meanwhile the English army was the weaker, the furious onslaught of the squadron in cuirasses of iron and breastplates of steel had ground away the infantry. A few men around a flag marked the place of the regiment. Many a battalion was commanded by a captain or by a lieutenant; the Hanoverian hussars, a whole regiment, had turned bridle and were in flight through the forest of Soigne, scattering panic as far as Brussels. The wagons, the caissons, the baggage, the ambulances full of wounded, when the French gained ground and approached the forest, fled headlong; the Dutch sabred by the French cavalry gave the alarm. For nearly two leagues towards Brussels there was a flood of fugitives. The panic was such that it reached the prince of Condé at Mechlin and Louis XVIII at Ghent.

The Iron Duke remained calm but his lips were blenched. At five o'clock Wellington drew out his watch, and he was heard to murmur these sombre words: "Blücher or night!" It was at about this moment that a far-off line of bayonets glittered on the heights towards Frischemont. Here is the turning-point of this giant drama.

The poignant mistake of Napoleon is well known; Grouchy was hoped for, but Blücher was coming up — death in place of life. If the little shepherd who served as guide to Bülow, Blücher's lieutenant, had counselled him to debouch from the forest above Frischemont rather than below Planchenoit, the form of the nineteenth century would have been perhaps different, for Napoleon would have gained the battle of Waterloo. By every other road except below Planchenoit the Prussian army would have come out upon a ravine impassable for artillery, and Bülow would not have arrived.

An hour later — it is the Prussian general, Müffling,[m] who declares it — Blücher would not have found Wellington standing; the battle would have been lost. At five o'clock, seeing the peril of Wellington, Blücher ordered Bülow to attack and said these remarkable words: "We must give the English army a little breath."

The rest is well known — the irruption of a third army, the battle disarranged, eighty-six muzzles thundering all at once; Pirch arriving with

Bülow, the cavalry of Zieten led by Blücher in person; the French repulsed, Marcognet swept from the plateau of Ohain, Durutte dislodged from Papelotte, Donzelot and Quiot retreating, Lobau taken on the oblique, a new battle precipitated upon the dismantled regiments of France in the falling night, the whole English line resuming the offensive and pushed forward; a gigantic trench cut in the French army, English grapeshot and Prussian grapeshot collaborating; extermination; disaster in front, disaster in flank; the guard entering the line during this fearful breakdown.

When the guard knew that it was going to its death, it cried, "*Vive l'empereur!*" History has nothing more moving than this agony breaking forth in acclamations. The sky had been hidden the whole day. All at once, at this very moment, eight o'clock in the evening, the clouds on the horizon parted and let through the elms on the road to Nivelles the great sinister crimson of the sun, which was now setting — they had seen it rise over Austerlitz! When the tall hats of the grenadiers of the guard, with the large plaques carrying the eagle, appeared, symmetrically aligned, tranquil, superb in the fog of that mêlée, the very enemy felt a respect for France; for they seemed to see twenty victories enter the field of battle, wings outstretched. Those who were the conquerors, thinking themselves conquered, retreated. But Wellington cried, "Up, guards, and at them!" The red regiment of the English guard hidden behind the hedges rose, a storm of grapeshot riddled the tricoloured flag shivering around the French eagle. Everyone flung forward and the supreme carnage began. The imperial guard felt in the gloom that the army was giving way around it, felt the vast emotion of the rout. It heard the "*Sauve qui peut!*" which had taken the place of the "*Vive l'empereur*"; but despite the panic behind it, it continued to advance, more and more thunder-beaten and perishing the more with every step that it took. There were no hesitants and no cowards. Not a man was missing to that suicide.

Ney, distracted, grand with all the haughtiness of accepted death, offered himself to every bolt in the tempest. He had his fifth horse killed under him. With eyes aflame, with lips frothing, uniform unbuttoned, one of his epaulettes half cut in two by the sabre slash of a horseguard, his plaque with its great eagle dented by a bullet — Ney, bleeding, muddy, magnificent, with a broken sword in his hand, said, "You shall see how a marshal of France dies on the battle-field." But in vain; he did not die. He was haggard and indignant; he tossed at Drouat d'Erlon this question, "Why don't you get yourself killed?" He cried out in the midst of all this artillery destroying a handful of men, "Is there nothing here for me? Oh, I wish that all the English bullets might enter my bowels!" But you were reserved for French bullets, poor wretch!

The panic back of the guard was lugubrious, for the army broke suddenly on all sides at once, from Hougomont, from La Haye Sainte, from Papelotte, from Planchenoit. The cry "treason" was followed by the cry "*Sauve qui peut!*" The ruin of an army is a thaw. Everything fails, splits, snaps, drifts, rolls, sinks, collides, flies, falls. And now there is disintegration unheard of. Ney borrows a horse, leaps upon it hatless, cravatless, swordless, throws himself across the highway from Brussels, checking at the same time the English and the French. He strives to hold back the army; he recalls it; he insults it; he clamps himself against the panic; but he is overwhelmed and the soldiers run from him crying "*Vive le Maréchal Ney!*" Two regiments of Durutte's come and go, amazed, pitched and tossed between the sabres of the Uhlans and the fusillade of the brigades of Kempt, Best, Pack, and of Rylandt. The worst of mêlées is in the time of panic: friends kill each other to escape; squadrons and battalions shatter and scatter each other into the enormous spume of battle. So now Lobau at one extreme and Reille at the other are rolled away in the drift. In vain Napoleon makes barricades with what remains of the guard; in vain he squanders with a last effort his service squadrons. Quiot recoils before Vivian, Kellermann before Vandeleur, Lobau before Bülow, Moran before Pirch, Domon and Subervie before Prince William of Prussia. Guyot, who has led the emperor's squadrons to the charge, falls under the feet of the English dragoons. Napoleon scuds along the line of fugitives, harangues them, urges them, threatens, implores. All the mouths that in the morning cried "*Vive l'empereur!*" are gaping now; the soldiers hardly know him.

The Prussian cavalry, arrived all fresh, dashes forward on the wing, slashes, thrusts, chops, kills, and exterminates. The teams bolt; the cannon take flight; the soldiers of the artillery-train unhitch the caissons and seize the horses to escape. Wagons overturned, their four wheels in air, block the road and are the occasion of massacre. Everybody tramples, crowds, overruns the dead and the living. Arms are torn off. A swirling multitude overflows the roads, the paths, the bridges, the plains, the hills, the valleys, the woods, choked by this flight of forty thousand men. Cries of despair, knapsacks, muskets flung into the rye, passages made with slashes of the sword, no more comrades, no more officers, no more generals — an ineffable dismay; Zieten sabring France at his ease; the lions become deer — such was that flight.

At Genappe they tried to turn back, to make a front, to apply the brake. Lobau rallied three hundred men and they barricaded the entrance to the village; but at the first volley of Prussian grapeshot, all turned again to flee, and Lobau was captured. The Prussians flung into Genappe, furious, no doubt, at having so small share in the victory. The pursuit was monstrous; Blücher ordered extermination. Roguet had set the dismal example by threatening with death any French grenadier who should bring him a Prussian prisoner, but Blücher surpassed Roguet. The general of the young guard, Duhesme, at bay against the door of a tavern in Genappe, offered his sword to an hussar of death, who took the sword and slew the prisoner. Victory was completed by the assassination of the vanquished. Old Blücher dishonoured himself, his ferocity gave the climax to the disaster. The panic in despair crossed Genappe, crossed Quatre Bras, crossed Gosselies, crossed Frasnes, crossed Charleroi, crossed Thuin, and paused only at the frontiers. Alas! and who was it then fleeing like this? The Grand Army!

This vertigo, this terror, this tumbling into ruin of the most high bravery that has ever astounded history, is it without cause? No. The shadow of an enormous justice falls across Waterloo. It is the day of destiny. The power above man had granted this day. Therefore the fearful bending of these heads; therefore all these great souls surrendering their swords. Those who had conquered Europe are fallen confounded; having nothing more to say or do, feeling in the shadow a terrible presence. *Hoc erat in fatis.* On this day the perspective of mankind has changed. Waterloo is the hinge of the nineteenth century. The going of the great man was necessary to the coming of the great cycle. The One who is not mocked has taken charge. The panic of the heroes is explained: in the battle of Waterloo there is more than a cloud, there is a meteor — God has passed by.

In the falling night, in a field near Genappe, Bernard and Bertrand seized by the skirt of his long coat and held back a man haggard, pensive,

sinister, who had been dragged thus far by the current of the panic, but now dismounted, passed his arm through the bridle of his horse, and with wild eyes turned back alone towards Waterloo. It was Napoleon trying once more to go forward, the immense somnambulist of a dream dissolved.

Certain squares of the guard, immovable in the flood of the panic like rocks in running water, held fast till night. Night coming, death also, they waited this double shadow unshaken, and let it envelop them. Each regiment, isolated from the others and having no further bond with the army broken in every part, died in its own account. There, abandoned, conquered, terrible, these sombre squares agonised horribly. Ulm, Wagram, Jena, Friedland, died in them.

At twilight, near nine o'clock in the evening, at the foot of the plateau of Mont St. Jean, there remained one square. In that deathly valley, now overflooded by the masses of English, and under the converging fire of the enemy's victorious artillery, under a frightful thickness of projectiles, this square struggled. It was commanded by an obscure officer named Cambronne. When the legion was no more than a handful, when their flag was no more than a tatter, when their guns, empty of bullets, were no more than clubs, when the pile of corpses was greater than the living group, there came among the vanquishers, the victors, a sort of sacred fear of men dying so sublimely, and the English artillery taking breath kept silence. This gave a sort of respite. Then the batteries blazed and the hill trembled; from all those mouths of bronze issued a last vomit of grapeshot and horror; a vast smoke vaguely blanched in the rising moon rolled up. When the smoke was dissipated, there was nothing left. The formidable remnant was annihilated; the guard was dead. The four walls of the living fortress were prone; hardly was there distinguishable here and there a quiver among the corpses. And it is thus that the French legions, more grand than the Roman legions, expired on Mont St. Jean, on the earth drenched with rain and blood, in the gloomy wheat, on the very spot where now, at four o'clock every morning, whistling and gayly flicking his horse, Joseph passes with the mail from Nivelles.

The battle of Waterloo is an enigma, it is as obscure to those who won it as to those who lost it. To Napoleon it is a panic; Blücher sees in it nothing but fire; Wellington understands nothing at all (look at the reports). The bulletins are confused, the commentaries are involved; these stammer, those stutter. Jomini[l] divides the battle of Waterloo into four movements, Müffling[m] cleaves it into three transformations.

A fulgurant day it was; in fact the crumbling of the military monarchy which, to the great stupor of the kings, had entrained all the realms — the fall of force, the defeat of war. Civilised people, especially in our times, do not rise or fall by the good or bad fortune of a captain. Their specific gravity in the humankind results from something more than a combat. Their honour — thank God! — their dignity, their light, their genius, are not numbers which heroes and conquerors — those gamblers — play in the lottery of battles. Often a battle lost is progress conquered; less glory, more liberty; the drum hushed, reason speaks. It is the game where whoso loses wins. Let us then speak calmly of Waterloo on both sides. Let us render to chance that which is chance's and to God that which is God's. What is Waterloo — a victory? No, a capital prize — the capital prize gained by Europe, paid by France.

Waterloo is a battle of the first order, won by a captain of the second. That which must be admired in the battle of Waterloo is England, it is

English firmness, it is English resolution, it is English blood. The superb thing about England — craving her pardon! — is herself; not her captain, but her army. Wellington is only a hero like another. Those Scots Greys, those horse guards, those regiments of Maitland and of Mitchell, that infantry of Pack and of Kempt, that cavalry of Ponsonby and of Somerset, those Highlanders playing the pibroch under the grapeshot, those battalions of Rylandt, those recruits all raw, who hardly knew how to handle the musket yet kept pace with the veteran bands of Essling and of Rivoli — there lies the glory! Wellington was tenacious — that was his merit, and we would not cheapen it; but the least of his footmen and of his horsemen was as solid as he. The iron soldier is worth as much as the iron duke.

What we admire above all in a contest like that of Waterloo is the prodigious skill of chance; that night rain, that wall of Hougomont, that sunken road of Ohain, Grouchy deaf to the cannon, Napoleon's guide who deceives him, Bülow's guide who enlightens him — the whole cataclysm was marvellously managed. On the whole, we say that Waterloo was more of a massacre than a battle. Waterloo is, of all set battles, the one that has the smallest front for the number of combatants: Napoleon a mile and three-quarters, Wellington, a mile — and that with seventy-two thousand combatants on each side. From that density rose the carnage.

The field of Waterloo has to-day the calm which belongs to the soil, the impassive support of man; and it resembles all plains. But at night a kind of visionary haze detaches itself. If perchance a traveller saunter there, if he look, if he listen, if he dream like Virgil in the funereal plains of Philippi, an hallucination of the disaster possesses him. The terrifying 18th of June lives again; the false hill built as a monument is effaced, and the lion somehow vanishes; the field of battle resumes its reality; lines of infantry undulate in the plain; furious gallops cross the horizon; the awestruck dreamer sees the flash of sabres, the glint of bayonets, the flare of shell, the monstrous interlacing of thunders; he hears like a rattle in the depths of a tomb the vague clamour of phantom battle. These shadows, they are grenadiers; these glimmers, they are cuirassiers; that skeleton is Napoleon; that other skeleton, Wellington. All this is no more, and yet it moves, it fights. The ravines robe themselves in purple, and the trees shiver; there is a fury even in the clouds, and, in the gloom, all those savage heights, Mont St. Jean, Hougomont, Frischemont, Papelotte, Planchenoit, rise in confusion, crowned with whirlwinds of ghosts, warring to the death.[n]

MINOR INCIDENTS OF WATERLOO

While there is perhaps no more famous battle-picture in literature than Victor Hugo's account of Waterloo, from which we have quoted above, it is strange that his unsurpassed dramatic power and his fervent patriotism should have slurred over one of the noblest incidents of the battle — the charge of the imperial guard. It remained for a British writer, Sir Archibald Alison, to pay French heroism a compliment equal to that paid to English oak by Victor Hugo. This and certain isolated incidents which precede or follow the charge of the guard we quote from Alison, beginning with Ponsonby's charge.[a]

The Cavalry Duels

Wellington no sooner perceived the formidable attack preparing against his left, than he drew up the fine brigade of horse, under Sir William

Ponsonby. His brigade, bursting through or leaping over the hedge which had concealed them from the enemy, dashed through the intervals of the infantry, which opened to let them pass, and fell headlong on the wavering column. The shock was irresistible; in a few seconds the whole mass was pierced through, ridden over, and dispersed. In five minutes two thousand prisoners and two eagles were taken — one by the Greys and the other by the Royals — and the column was utterly destroyed. Transported with ardour, the victorious horse charged on against a second column of D'Erlon's men, which quickly was ridden down, and a thousand more prisoners were taken. The Highland foot-soldiers, vehemently excited, breaking their ranks, and catching hold of the stirrups of the Scots Greys, joined in the charge, shouting "Scotland for ever!" and collected the prisoners made during the fiery onset. Unsatisfied even by this second triumph, these gallant horsemen, amidst loud shouts, rode up the opposite height; and having reached its summit, turned sharp to the left and dashed through D'Erlon's batteries, which had sent such a storm of shot through their ranks before the charge began. Taken thus suddenly in flank, the gunners could neither wheel round their pieces nor make any resistance, and they were speedily cut to pieces, the traces cut, and the horses hamstrung or killed.

So forcibly was Napoleon struck by this charge, that he said to Lacoste, the Belgian guide beside him, "*Ces terribles chevaux gris — comme ils travaillent!*" He instantly ordered Jaquenot's light cavalry to charge the victorious British; and these fresh troops easily overthrew the English horsemen, now much disordered and entirely blown by their unparalleled efforts, as they were retiring from the theatre of their triumphs. In the hurried retreat to their own position, General Ponsonby was killed, great numbers of his men were cut down or dispersed, and the brigade hardly brought back a fifth of its numbers. But the lancers in their turn shared the fate of their gallant opponents; Vandeleur fell upon them in flank when streaming in pursuit up the English slope, and drove them back with great slaughter into the hollow.

By the help of this timely succour, the heavy brigade, by small detachments, regained their own lines though grievously weakened. But never, perhaps, had a charge of an equal body of horse achieved greater success; for, besides destroying two columns five thousand strong, and taking three thousand prisoners, we have the authority of Jomini,[1] the great military historian of Napoleon, for the fact that they carried, cut the traces, and rendered useless for the remainder of the day, no less than forty pieces of cannon.

The British guns, which stood in front, forty in number, repeatedly fell into the hands of the French cavalry, whose valour, always great, was now roused to the most enthusiastic pitch of daring.[1] The artillerymen took refuge in the nearest squares: the cuirassiers rode round them anxiously looking for an opening, sometimes with desperate valour striving to make it at the sword's point, until the rolling fire of the infantry repelled the charge; and as soon as the horsemen turned about, the gunners issued forth, quickly reloaded their pieces, and sent a destructive storm of grape after the retiring squadrons.

[1 By Wellington's orders, the gunners, after discharging their pieces when the cavalry were close upon them, unlimbered the near wheel of each gun and retired rapidly, rolling the wheel with them into the nearest square. Speedily the French horsemen came up, and threw ropes prepared for the purpose, like the South American lasso, over the gun; but they could not make it move along on one wheel; and when striving to drag along their prize, the deadly volley of the square stretched on the ground half of those engaged.]

The Old Guard Charges

It was a quarter past seven when the first column of the guard moved forward to the attack. The veterans of Wagram and Austerlitz were there;[1] no force on earth seemed capable of resisting them; they had decided almost every former battle. The sun was low in the heavens when this formidable body began to ascend the slope. The shadow of the mass before its level rays augmented its awful impression. The huge caps of the grenadiers seemed a dark forest, slowly rolling on like "Birnam wood to Dunsinane"; and though it occasionally rocked under the terrible fire of the English artillery, yet the shock was quickly recovered. The ranks closed as gaps were made; and through the smoke and fire of the tirailleurs, the sable plumes of the grenadiers were seen unceasingly approaching. The British felt that the decisive moment had arrived:[2] their honour, their country, was at stake; a few paces more, and Europe was enslaved. The French were inspired with the utmost confidence.

The impulse of this massy column was at first irresistible. The guns on the sides, especially those of Bolton's battery, tore its flank without checking its advance.[3] The lofty bearskins of the grenadiers, as they crowned the summit of the ridge amidst the smoke, gave them the appearance of giants.

The British soldiers were lying down in a ditch three feet deep behind the rough road which there goes along the summit of the ridge. "Up, guards, and at them!" cried the duke, who had repaired to the spot, and the whole, springing up, moved forward a few paces, and poured in a volley so close and well directed, that nearly the whole first two ranks of the imperial guard fell at once. A rapid and well-sustained fusillade ensued; Adam's artillerymen, who worked their guns with extraordinary rapidity, firing grape and canister within fifty paces of their flank, at length staggered the column, which gave ground and began to recoil down the slope.

The second column of the guard now advanced to the attack, in all four thousand strong. Without taking their muskets from their shoulders, the men, preceded by a cloud of tirailleurs, marched unshrinkingly, and with loud cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" into the cross-fire of the English batteries. Adam's guns opened on them a fire so terrible that the head of the body, constantly pushed on by the mass in rear, for long seemed never to advance, but melted away as it came into the scene of carnage. With dauntless intrepidity, however, the guard advanced through the storm; and, at length,

[1 No one was admitted into the Guard, Middle or Old, until he had served twelve campaigns.]

[2 Wellington, foreseeing that this attack would be the last, arranged his defence like a general who knows that help is coming, that his safety depends on a short resistance, while, if he gives way, not a gun, not a man of his army can escape. — VAULABELLE.[s] General Foy[t] paid this tribute to the English: "We saw on the day of our disaster the children of Albion formed in battalion squares on the plain between Hougomont and the village of Mont St. Jean; the cavalry which supported them were torn to pieces; the fire of their artillery was extinguished; death was before them and in their ranks — shame was behind them. In this terrible affair the bullets of the imperial guard shot point-blank and the cavalry of victorious France could not tame the immovable infantry of Britain. You might have believed that it had taken root in the earth if some moments after sunset these battalions had not moved majestically forward, as the arrival of the Prussian army apprised Wellington that, thanks to numbers, thanks to the power of inertia, and as his prize for knowing how to range brave men in battle, he was about to carry off the most decisive victory of the age."]

[3 When the imperial guard, led by Ney, about half-past seven o'clock, made their appearance from a corn-field in close columns of grand divisions, nearly opposite, and within fifty yards from the muzzles of the guns, orders were given to load with canister-shot, and literally five rounds were fired with this species of shot before they showed the least symptom of retiring. At the twenty-ninth round, their left gave way. — *Letter of an artillery officer, given in Maxwell.*[u]]

the huge body reached the top of the hill. The British in silence threw a terrible volley, on receiving which the two front ranks of the imperial guard went down like grass before the scythe. Wellington at this decisive instant ordered Adam's brigade to advance against the flank of the column; and soon after directed Vivian with his brigade to descend in the rear of Adam's men, between the guard and Hougomont, and Vandeleur to follow him. The effect of this attack at once in front and in flank was decisive: Napoleon in his official account ascribed to it the loss of the battle. The broken remains, closely pursued by Adam at the point of the bayonet, were hurled back, and all rallying was rendered impossible.

The Prussians Arrive

From morning till night on this eventful day, the British squares had stood, enduring every loss and repelling every attack with unparalleled fortitude. But the instant of victory had now arrived; the last hour of Napoleon's empire had struck. At the very moment that the last column of the Middle Guard was recoiling in disorder down the hill, Wellington beheld Blücher's standards in the wood beyond Ohain. He instantly ordered a general advance in the formation in which they stood, and himself, with his hat in his hand raised high in air, rode to the front and waved on the troops. The last rays of the sun glanced on 40,000 men, who, with a shout which caused the very earth to shake, streamed over the summit of the hill; a long red continuous line along the ground marked where they had stood at the commencement of the fight. At the same time, Bülow's and Zieten's corps of Prussians, of whom 36,000 had already come up, emerged entirely from the wood, and advanced with a swift step and in the finest order. A hundred guns, arranged in the form of an amphitheatre on the skirts of the wood, opened a tremendous fire over their heads, and the balls soon began to fall in the midst of the French army, on the chaussée of La Belle Alliance.

Seven times the wearied French, ready to drop down, tried to form bivouacs; seven times they were roused by the dreadful sound of the Prussian trumpet, and obliged to continue their flight without intermission.[1]

At Genappe some resistance was attempted. But the town was taken amid loud cheers, and with it Napoleon's travelling carriage, private papers, hat, and sword. The torrent — horse, foot, and artillery, all intermingled — continued to defile over the bridge at Charleroi during the whole day; but scarcely 40,000 passed the Sambre, and they carried with them only 27 guns.

"Such," said Napoleon, "was the battle of Mont St. Jean: glorious to the French army, yet how fatal!" The loss of the allies in it was immense. That of the British, King's German legion, and Hanoverians, alone amounted to 10,000, of whom 2,023 were killed. The loss of Waterloo itself, on the part of the whole troops engaged, was above 22,000. The field of battle next day presented a scene of matchless horror. The total loss of Wellington's army, from the 15th to the 19th, was 20,290, including that of the Belgian and German auxiliaries, but exclusive of the Prussians, who lost 7,000 more at Waterloo alone. The Prussian loss on the 16th and 18th, including the action at Wavre on the latter of these days, was 33,120. Of the French army it is sufficient to say that it was weakened on the field by at least 40,000 at Waterloo alone; but, in effect, it was totally destroyed, and scarcely any of the men who fought there ever again appeared in arms.

[1 "*Die Franzosen so aus sieben bivouacs nacheinander aufgejagt wurden.*"—GROLMAN DAMITZ. P]

GROUCHY'S USELESS SUCCESS

While this terrible battle was raging at Waterloo, Marshal Grouchy, with his corps, was actively engaged with Thielmann in the neighbourhood of Wavre. Napoleon's orders, verbally communicated to that marshal when he received the command, were to follow the Prussians, to attack them, and never lose sight of them. At noon, the cannonade at Waterloo was distinctly heard in Grouchy's army. But Grouchy was too well aware of the implicit obedience to orders which the emperor exacted to adopt these suggestions; and he received soon after instructions from Soult, dated 10 o'clock on the 18th of June, to continue his movement on Wavre.

On the following morning, Thielmann, who had now heard of the glorious victory on the preceding day, attacked Grouchy at daybreak, but was vigorously repulsed; and the French general was preparing to follow up his success and march upon Brussels, when the fatal news arrived of the rout at Waterloo on the preceding day, followed by orders from the emperor for Grouchy to retreat and effect a junction with the remainder of the army.[1] He faithfully obeyed his instructions, and rejoined the main body of the French army with 32,000 men and 96 guns in excellent order.

The campaign of Waterloo having been the intermediate cause of the overthrow of Napoleon, it has been made, as may well be believed, the subject of unfounded discussion and criticism, both on the continent and in Great Britain, and equally on the part of the allied writers as on that of the French. In the first place, it is evident, whatever the English writers may say to the contrary, that both Blücher and the duke of Wellington were unexpectedly assailed by Napoleon's invasion of Belgium on the 15th of June; and that he gained in the outset a great, and what had well-nigh proved a decisive, advantage by that circumstance. Being superior by nearly 70,000 troops to those at the command of the French emperor, it was to their interest never to have fought at a disadvantage, and not to have made a final stand till their two great armies were in a situation mutually to assist and support each other.

In justice, however, to Blücher, it must be recollected that he gave battle at Ligny in firm reliance on the effective co-operation of Wellington's army, 60,000 strong at least, in the latter part of the day. He had been promised by Wellington in person that he would be on the French flank that afternoon. It was to gain time for their co-operation that he prolonged, with such desperate resolution, the murderous strife in the villages, and all but gave his life to hold his ground. In a word, Blücher did at Ligny, on the 16th, what Wellington did on the 18th at Waterloo; and for the same reason, that he hourly expected a decisive attack from a friendly force on the enemy's flank. And this shows how much the English general's delay in concentrating his army disconcerted at the outset the plan of the campaign. The campaign would thus have been secured, and Napoleon overthrown in the very first encounter, without risk to either party.

In considering the comparative shares which the British and Prussian armies had in the achievement of this glorious victory, an impartial judgment must award the highest part to the British troops. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the arrival of Bülow's corps at that hour compelled Napoleon to detach the two divisions of Lobau's corps, and at last

[1 Even after he first heard of Napoleon's defeat, Grouchy proposed to march upon Brussels, and from thence regain Flanders by passing along the rear of the allied armies, but he yielded to the unanimous wish of his generals for a direct retreat. — CHARRAS. 2]

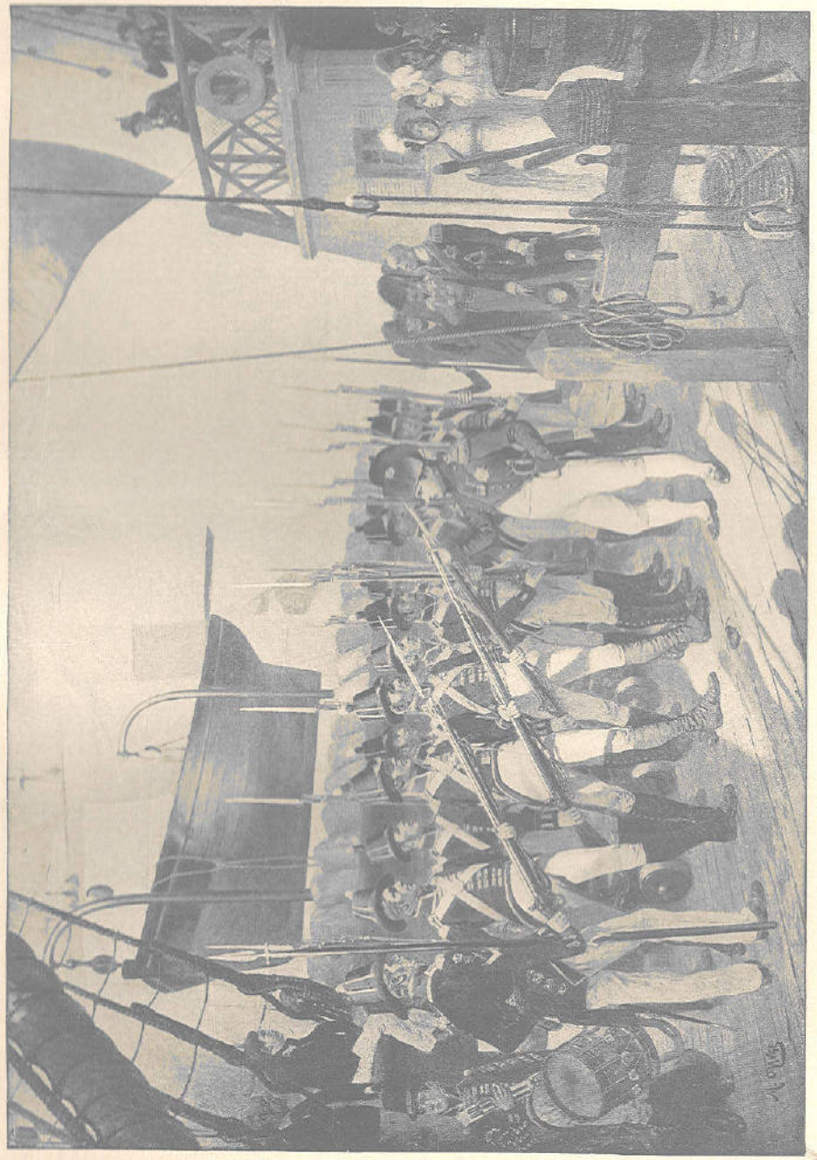
eleven battalions of his Young and Old Guard to maintain Planchenoit against them, and consequently withdrew them from the field of battle against the English. Had they not appeared in force on the field, as they did at half-past seven at night, it is doubtful if the French army would have been repulsed. Indeed, the nearly balanced state of the battle, at the time of the last attack by the imperial guard, renders it very doubtful if the English could have maintained their ground if Lobau's two divisions and the eleven battalions of the guard had, at that decisive moment, been thrown into the scale, and the attacking columns of infantry, as on all former occasions, had been flanked by powerful bodies of cavalry.

The loss of the battle of Waterloo to Napoleon seems to have been mainly owing to the imprudent use he made of nearly his whole cavalry in a desperate strife during the middle of the action. So sensible indeed was he that his defeat was chiefly owing to this cause, that he said afterwards that the cavalry, in the enthusiasm of the moment, engaged in part "without his orders." This, however, is not probable, when his imperious character is considered; and it affords another example of what his history so often showed, that he never took blame to himself if he could, justly or unjustly, lay it on another. Had Napoleon followed a different course: had he husbanded his horse till the close of the action, and then brought up his columns of the guard, supported by D'Erlon's and Reille's divisions, and screened on either flank by 5,000 of his formidable lancers and cuirassiers, it is difficult to see how it could have been resisted, when it is recollected how nearly such an attack had succeeded without the aid of such flank protection.

THE EMPEROR'S SECOND ABDICATION (JUNE 23RD, 1815)

At Waterloo 72,000 Frenchmen had struggled against 115,000 enemies and had twice seen the victory escape from their hands. Such was this four days' campaign. The retreat was as disastrous as those of Leipsic and of Moscow; nothing had been prepared for a reverse; the whole of the baggage was lost. From Laon, where the army began to rally, Napoleon set out for Paris. He entered the capital at midnight and took up his quarters at the Élysée. He counted on the patriotism of the chambers. "If they support me," he said, "nothing is lost." But Fouché, minister of police, spread a rumour that the emperor was meditating an 18th Brumaire, and the chamber of representatives, on the motion of La Fayette, proclaimed that the country was in danger, summoned the national guard to its defence, and declared guilty of treason whosoever should attempt to dissolve it. Napoleon, stupefied by this attack, endeavoured to reassure the deputies and called for concord. "I see but one man between us and peace," said La Fayette; "we have done enough for him; our duty is to save the country."

A message was sent to the emperor demanding his abdication, and Napoleon resigned himself. "Frenchmen," he said, "I offer myself as a sacrifice to the hate of the enemies of France; my political life is ended: I proclaim my son, Napoleon II, emperor of the French." The assembly accepted this declaration, though without pronouncing the name of Napoleon II, who was then in the hands of the Austrians. A provisional government was appointed and a special commission was charged to negotiate with the allies. But the latter refused all offers of peace. Wellington and Blücher marched with all speed on Paris. This was a not imprudent step; the relics of Waterloo, the uninjured corps of Grouchy, had concentrated near the capital, where,



NAPOLEON ON THE BELLEROPHON
(From the painting by Orange)

[1815 A.D.]

joined by numerous reinforcements, they formed an army of 100,000 men. More than 60,000 national guards and workmen defended the city, which had been fortified on the northern side. The hostile army was less numerous than the French; but the president of the provisional government, Fouché, wished to place the younger branch of the Bourbons on the throne, or, if this could not be accomplished, to return to the elder branch.

When Napoleon offered to put himself at the head of the troops, showing how easy it was to crush at least this first enemy, Fouché not only answered by a refusal, but he forced the emperor to quit Malmaison, whither he had retired.

Threatened with being delivered up to the enemy, Napoleon set out for Rochefort, thinking to seek a refuge in the United States. But all the passages were guarded. After long hesitation he presented himself on board the English ship *Bellerophon* and wrote to the regent of England:

"YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS:

An object of attack to all the factions which divide my country and of the enmity of the great powers of Europe, I have ended my political career and I come like Themistocles to take my seat at the hearth of the British people. I place myself under the protection of its laws, whose shelter I claim from your royal highness as from the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies."

The English government treated as a prisoner of war the man who came so nobly to claim its hospitality. The emperor was conducted to the island of St. Helena in the middle of the Atlantic under a burning sky five hundred leagues from land. As, from the deck of the *Bellerophon*, he saw the coast of France disappear, he exclaimed: "Farewell, land of the brave! Farewell, dear France! A few traitors less and thou wouldst still be the great nation, the mistress of the world!" A cry of grief but not of justice; for the defections of the last hour had been without importance for his destiny, and France's misfortunes came, not from treason, but from his mistakes.

Treaties of 1815

In the wreck of the empire France well-nigh perished. Neither the chamber nor the government could have defended Paris save by an heroic madness which would have retarded her fall by a few days only. In spite of an address from seventeen generals who desired to continue the struggle, in spite of the ardour of the troops who still wished to fight, Davout signed a convention with Blücher, in accordance with which the French army was to withdraw behind the Loire without firing a shot. The allies took possession of Paris as of a conquered town. Blücher wanted to blow up the Pont d'Iéna and throw down the column of the Grande Armée. The museum of the Loire was despoiled of the masterpieces which victory had heaped up there: the libraries, the collections of treasures, were given up to pillage.

The chamber of deputies had thought that the invaders would deal with it; but the allies closed the hall of assembly and replaced Louis XVIII on the throne. This second restoration cost France dear: 100,000,000 francs had to be paid to the allies, then another war indemnity of 700,000,000 francs and 300,000,000 francs more for individual claims. This was not all: 150,000 foreign soldiers remained for three years on French soil, paid and fed at the French expense that they might do police duty for Europe in France. Finally the Treaty of Paris (November 20th) took from her Philippeville, Mariembourg, the duchy of Bouillon, Saarlouis, and the banks

of the Saar, Landau, several communes of the country of Gex and Savoy, which the treaty of 1814 had left her; in all 534,000 inhabitants. She was also deprived of the right to maintain garrisons in the principality of Monaco, beyond the Var, and the fortifications of Hüningen were to be destroyed and never rebuilt. This city had earned its fate by the heroic defence made there from the 25th of June to the 27th of August by a garrison of 135 men. Auxonne also had not capitulated before that date, fifty-five days after the second capitulation of Paris.

After twenty-five years of victories the national territory extended less far in certain directions than was the case a century earlier, at the end of the reign of Louis XIV; and during that century the other powers had all immeasurably increased their strength. Prussia, from a simple electorate, had become a great monarchy; Russia, then scarcely in existence, was now a colossus; England had gained 100,000,000 subjects in the Indies and had seized the empire of the ocean. Thus France was not only weakened by what she had lost but by all that her rivals had gained.

Besides all this, the treaties of 1815 had perfidiously made gaps in her frontier. Philippeville, Mariembourg, and Bouillon commanded the passes of the Ardennes; nothing was left on that side but Rocroi. Saarlouis afforded a base in the middle of the valley of the Saar, between the Moselle and the Vosges, and Landau defended the approaches of Strasburg; these two cities were taken from France. Hüningen could threaten Bâle with her cannon or at least close her bridge on the Rhine; so Hüningen was dismantled. Savoy restored to Piedmont placed France at a distance from the Alps, her frontier. Bavaria, her ancient ally in Germany, was placed at her gates in the Palatinate to become her enemy. Prussia was established in the valley of the Moselle in order to arrest her if she attempted to go out of Metz or Thionville; the kingdom of the Netherlands was erected to keep her away from the mouths of the Maas and the Schelde, and in the Italian peninsula the gift of the kingdom of Lombardy to Austria re-established Austrian influence in the Italian peninsula at the expense of the French who were thus excluded. In a word, by the Treaty of the Holy Alliance, that Europe which Napoleon had desired to unite under his sway, was indeed united, but against France.[e]

THE LAST YEARS OF NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA (1815–1821 A.D.)

Napoleon did not long survive the most distinguished of his old companions in arms. Although he was subjected to no restraint at St. Helena, was permitted to ride over nearly the whole island, and enjoyed a degree of luxury and comfort, both in his habitation and in the society with which he was surrounded, which bore a striking contrast to the stern severity with which he had treated state prisoners; yet his proud spirit chafed against the coercion of being confined at all to an island. The British government had given the most express instructions that he should be treated with all the respect due to his rank as a general, and with all the indulgence consistent with security against his escape; but Sir Hudson Lowe, who was appointed to the military command of the island, proved an unhappy selection. His manner was rigid and unaccommodating, and his temper of mind, not softened by chivalrous ideas or high-bred society, was little calculated to alleviate the distress which the emperor endured during his detention.

But while all must regret that it should have been necessary, under any circumstances, to act with even seeming harshness towards so great a man, yet justice can see nothing to condemn in the conduct of the British

government in this particular, whatever it may do as to want of courtesy in the governor of the island. It was indispensable to the peace of the world to prevent his escape; and the expedition from Elba had shown that no reliance could be placed either on his professions or his treaties. Detention and secure custody, therefore, were unavoidable; and every comfort consistent with these objects was afforded him by the British government. He was allowed the society of the friends who had accompanied him in his exile; he had books in abundance to amuse his leisure hours; saddle-horses in profusion were at his command; and the bill of fare of his table, which is given by Las Cases[v] as a proof of the severity of the British government, would be thought the height of luxury by most persons in a state of liberty. If the English government had acted towards Napoleon as he did to others who opposed him, they would have shot him in the first ditch, as he did the duke d'Enghien or Hofer, or shut him up in an Alpine fortress, as he did the cardinal Pacca.

But his mortal career in the scene of his exile and suffering was not destined to be of long duration. The vexation which he experienced at finding all the plans frustrated which had been formed — and they were many — for his escape, the fretting which he suffered from the sight of the English sentries round his dwelling, the recollection of his lost greatness, the prospect of endless detention, combined with a hereditary malady to produce severe complaints. He suffered much from these; but it was at first hoped that they would yield to the skill of his medical attendants. Gradually, however, the affections became more severe; and they at length assumed the decided symptoms of cancer in the stomach, to which his father had fallen a victim at a still earlier age. Towards the end of March, 1821, his strength sank rapidly; he dictated his will, with a great variety of minute bequests; but obstinately refused to take medicine, to which he had a great aversion. "All that is to happen," said he, "is written down; our hour is marked; we cannot prolong it a minute beyond what fate has predestined." He directed that his heart should be sent to the empress Marie Louise at Parma, and his stomach examined, to see if he had died of the hereditary malady.

At two o'clock on the 3rd of May, 1821, he received extreme unction, declared that he died in the Roman Catholic faith, which had been that of his fathers, and gave minute directions for his body being laid in state in a *chapelle ardente*, according to the form of the Catholic worship. "Can you not," said he to Antommarchi,[w] his physician, "believe in God, whose existence everything proclaims, and in whom the greatest minds have believed? I am of the religion of my fathers."[1] On the 5th, a violent storm of wind and rain arose; the death-struggle of Napoleon took place during its fury; and the last words he was heard to utter were, "*Tête d'armée.*" He breathed his last at eleven minutes before six in the evening. In his will, which contained a vast number of bequests, were two very remarkable ones: the one was a request that his body might repose on the banks of the Seine, among the people whom he had loved so well; the other, a legacy of 10,000 francs to the assassin Cantillon, who had attempted recently before to murder the duke of Wellington.

Napoleon had himself indicated the place in St. Helena where he wished his remains to be interred, if they were not allowed to be removed to France. It was in a small hollow called Slane's Valley, where a fountain,

[1 Lord Rosebery,[x] however, shows that Napoleon was generally skeptical of Christianity, and when not entirely materialistic, favoured Mohammed above Christ.]

shaded with weeping willows, had long been a favourite spot for his meditations. He was laid in the coffin in his three-cornered hat, military surtout, leather under-dress, and boots, as he appeared on the field of battle. The place of sepulture was consecrated by an English clergyman according to the form of the church of England. The coffin was lowered amidst the speechless emotion and tears of all present; three successive volleys of musketry and artillery announced that the mighty conqueror was laid in his grave; a simple stone, of great size, was placed over his remains; and the solitary willow wept over the tomb of him for whom the earth itself had once hardly seemed a fitting mausoleum.[o]

ESTIMATES OF NAPOLEON

Lamartine's Estimate

The intelligence of Napoleon's death changed the immense terror, which had beset Europe during his life, into immense pity. When people ceased to fear him, they ceased to hate. Impartial minds began to do him justice. Genius and glory were not denied to him; but it was deplored that so much genius and so much glory had been consecrated only to the personal greatness of one man, instead of being devoted to the amelioration of the world. This is where he failed to his destiny, to God, to humanity, to France, and to himself. The fine part of his character was not equalled by the good. He was the greatest man of modern times, but he was also the most sterile in results for the human race. He wasted France and Europe for fourteen years, without imparting to them an idea, a liberty, or a virtue. He shook the world without displacing it. France, however, which owes him a severe judgment, owes him also impartial gratitude. He made her illustrious, he made her resound with the splendour of his own name, during the early part of a century, through the universe. It is a service to aggrandise the name of one's country, for the name of a people is a spell in time and history, and a certain claim to immortality.[y]

Edmond Schérer's Estimate

History, in judging the total of Napoleon's career, will pronounce it sterile and disastrous. If one seeks to discover what he really wished, what he did, what he left, one finds nothing. He acted without object, lived upon chance, bestirred himself in a vacuum. He may have saved France, but to allow her to fall deeper than before. He did not give his great mind to the service of one grand idea. He has not attached his name to any work. He rendered no service to humanity. He represented nothing in history. He pursued that insensate and barbarous thing, war, for the sake of war. He piled up conquests after the manner of the ancient Eastern despots.

Napoleon was not a statesman because he had no political ideas. And what must we say, if, instead of placing ourselves at the point of view of French politics, we wish to judge him from that of civilisation. Civilisation is composed of moral ideas, and he misunderstood them all. What contempt of humanity! What ignorance of its instincts and its needs! What a misconception of modern society! What contempt of everything spiritual! He knew only force, and in matters of thought only that which serves force. He trampled under foot all rights. As he understood only the lower parts of government, so he understood in civil society only the material elements.

He restored the church, but only to keep it under his hand and govern it. He reorganised the Institute, but he conceived eloquence, poetry, and literature only as charged with burning an eternal incense in his honour. He gave us a code, but he refused us institutions. He re-established our finances and suppressed our liberties. He showed himself, properly speaking, neither virtuous, nor vicious. He was one of the southern natures, in which the moral side of the man was simply wanting. That is why he is at once great and so small, so astonishing and so vulgar.[z]

Sir William Napier's Estimate

The annual expenditure of France was scarcely half that of England; and Napoleon rejected public loans, which are the life-blood of state corruption. He left no debt. Under him no man devoured the public substance in idleness merely because he was of a privileged class; the state servants were largely paid, but they were made to labour effectually for the state. They did not eat their bread and sleep. His system of public accounts, remarkable for its exactness, simplicity, and comprehensiveness, was vitally opposed to public fraud and therefore extremely unfavourable to corruption. Napoleon's power was supported in France by that deep sense of his goodness as a sovereign, and that admiration for his genius which pervaded the poorer and middle classes of the people; by the love they bore him, and still bear for his memory, because he cherished the principles of a just equality. They loved him also for his incessant activity in the public service, his freedom from private vices; and because his public works, wondrous for their number, their utility, and grandeur, never stood still: under him the poor man never wanted work. To France he gave noble institutions, a comparatively just code of laws, and glory unmatched since the days of the Romans. His *Cadastre*, more extensive and perfect than the *Doomsday Book*, that monument of the wisdom and greatness of our Norman Conqueror, was alone sufficient to endear him to the nation. Rapidly advancing under his vigorous superintendence, it registered and taught every man the true value and nature of his property, and all its liabilities public or private. It was designed and ably adapted to fix and secure titles to property, to prevent frauds, to abate litigation, to apportion the weight of taxes equally and justly, to repress the insolence of the tax-gatherer without injury to the revenue, and to secure the sacred freedom of the poor man's home. The French *Cadastre*, although not original, would, from its comprehensiveness, have been, when completed, the greatest boon ever conferred upon a civilised nation by a statesman.

To say that the emperor was supported by his soldiers, is to say that he was supported by the people; because the law of conscription, that mighty staff on which France leaned when all Europe attempted to push her down, — the conscription, without which she could never have sustained the dreadful war of antagonistic principles entailed upon her by the Revolution, — that energetic law, which he did not establish, but which he freed from abuse and rendered great, national, and endurable, by causing it to strike equally on all classes, — the conscription made the soldiers the real representatives of the people. The troops idolised Napoleon, well they might; and to say their attachment commenced only when they became soldiers, is to acknowledge that his excellent qualities and greatness of mind turned hatred into devotion the moment he was approached. But Napoleon never was hated by the people of France; he was their own creation and they loved him

as never monarch was loved before. His march from Cannes to Paris, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of poor men, who were not soldiers, can never be effaced or even disfigured.[b]

Jules Barni's Estimate

That monster, the legend of Napoleon, is still before us, always devouring truth and historical morality; and the pretended philosophy of history which sanctifies this legend by elevating the Cæsars as great and providential men, and presents malefactors as saviours of the people—this detestable philosophy of history has reached its greatest hour of triumph.

History does not offer us any subject of study more extraordinary. Where shall we find in fact a more marvellous fate than that of the man who, from a simple officer of artillery, made himself absolute master of France; filled all Europe with the terror of his arms; raised the throne which had been swept away by the storms of the Revolution, to place himself on it under the name of emperor, distributed the spoils of the conquered countries, as if to vassals, amongst his brothers and comrades-at-arms; endeavoured in fact in the nineteenth century to realise a universal monarchy; succumbed under the strokes of all the European powers united against him; saw himself compelled to abdicate, and reduced to reigning in the island of Elba, he the erstwhile master of France and Europe. He soon escaped to reappear for a moment at the Tuileries; and vanquished again, went to die a prisoner on a rock of the Atlantic Ocean, leaving a name as famous as that of Alexander and Cæsar, a name which was in every mouth and all imaginations, as he said himself at St. Helena.

But contrary to legend, Napoleon, far from being the continuer of the Revolution, had been, according to the expression of Madame de Staël, "the first of the counter-revolutionists." The 18th Brumaire, far from having been an act of salvation, had been a misfortune for France, and, in any case, a crime. In fact his exile to St. Helena had been the too just expiation, as badly borne as well merited, of the many outrages which had commenced on the 18th Brumaire.[bb]

Lord Rosebery's Estimate; A Contemporary Estimate

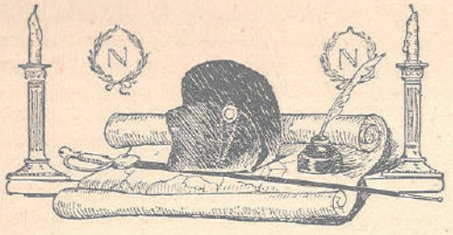
Lord Rosebery[a] compares Napoleon to Cæsar, Attila, Tamerlane, and Mohammed, and sees in the far more significant and abiding power of the last named, another proof of how inconsequential and ephemeral is the effect of mere warfare in determining the ultimate course of human events. He cites Madame d'Houdetot to the effect that Napoleon "contracts history and expands imagination," and Lord Dudley's enthusiastic declaration that Napoleon "has thrown a doubt on all past glory; has made all future renown impossible." "This," he says, "is hyperbole, but with a substance of truth." It would be futile, perhaps, to attempt a juster estimate in fewer words.

It will be of interest to conclude our sketch of the great Corsican with the views of a contemporary, as recorded in the London *Times* of July 5, 1821:—

"The vicissitudes of such a life as that of Napoleon," says the unnamed writer in *The Times*, "are the most valuable lessons which history can furnish. Connected with, and founded in, the principles of his character, the varieties of fortune which Bonaparte experienced are of a nature to illustrate the most useful maxims of benevolence, patriotism, or discretion. They embrace both extremes of the condition of man in society, and therefore address themselves to all ranks of human beings. The community of which Bonaparte was in his

early days a member, and the military education which he received, may, independently of any original bias of character, have laid the foundation of the greatness to which he attained, and of that mischievous application of unbridled power through which he fell very nearly to the level whence he first had started.

"Bonaparte came into active life with as much (but we have no reason to think a larger share of) lax morality and pure selfishness as others of his age and calling. The public crisis into which he was thrown gave to profound selfishness the form of insatiable ambition. With talents and enterprise beyond all comparison greater than any against which he had to contend, he overthrew whatever opposed his progress. Thus ambition in him was more conspicuous than others, only because it was more successful. Our business is not to apologise for Bonaparte, but, so far as may be done within the brief limits of a newspaper, to analyse and faithfully describe him. The factions which he was compelled to crush, and whose overthrow obtained for him the gratitude of his country, still threatened a resurrection when the compressing force should be withdrawn. Hence were pretexts furnished on behalf of despotism of which men more enlightened and better constituted than Bonaparte might not soon have discovered the fallacy. Raised to empire at home, his ambition sought for itself fresh aliment; and foreign conquest was at once tempting and easy. Here the natural reflection will obtrude itself—what might not this extraordinary being have effected for the happiness of mankind, and for his own everlasting fame and grandeur, had he used but a moiety of the force or perseverance in generous efforts to relieve the oppressed, which he wasted in rendering himself the monopolist and patron of oppression! But he had left himself no resource. He had extinguished liberty in France, and had no hold upon his subjects but their love of military glory. Conquest therefore succeeded conquest until nothing capable of subjugation was left to be subdued. Insolence and rapacity in the victor produced among the enslaved nations impatience of their misery and a thirst for vengeance. Injustice undermined itself, and Bonaparte with his unseasoned empire fell together, the pageant of a day."[a]



APPENDIX A

A CHARACTERISATION OF THE NAPOLEONIC PERIOD (1795–1815)

By JOHN HOLLAND ROSE

Litt.D. (Camb.) (Author of "The Life of Napoleon I.," "Napoleonic Studies")

Those who look beneath the surface of events and penetrate to the deeper causes which influence the fortunes of nations, will find that the Napoleonic Period falls naturally into three lesser epochs, coinciding in the main with the years 1795–1799, 1800–1807, and 1808–1815.

The first epoch begins with the overthrow of the malcontents and royalists by Bonaparte and the troops of the Convention on the 13th Vendémiaire (October 5, 1795); it ends with the *coup d' état* of 19th Brumaire (November 10, 1799), when the young general scattered the deputies of France by armed force. The two events differ widely in their political complexion; the one put an end to what must speedily have become a royalist reaction; the other ended the days of parliamentary rule. Yet they have this much in common, that both of them cut the Gordian knot of a political crisis with the sword; and the soldier who was mainly instrumental in prolonging democratic institutions in 1795, shattered them four years later when they, and they alone, stood between him and supreme power.

In truth, the young Napoleon Bonaparte was the only man who discerned and satisfied the imperious needs of the time. These were, the perpetuation of the essentials of revolutionary legislation, and the defeat of the foreign Powers most hostile to France. The former of these was secured at Vendémiare; but the sequel showed that the institutions and the civilian rulers of France in these four years of the Directory were alike unsuited to the requirements of the age. Civil strifes ensued which served to throw up in brilliant contrast the triumphs gained by Bonaparte over Austria in 1796–1797. That contrast was to be fatal to parliamentary government in France for many a year. Returning from Egypt at the psychological moment, Bonaparte easily disposed of the Directors and deputies of France, thus ending the period of absolute democracy and inaugurating a system of personal rule based on the agrarian settlement of the Revolution.

The years 1800–1807 saw the overthrow of the Second and Third Coalitions against France and the completion of the work of national consolidation to which Bonaparte, as First Consul, set his hand after the stroke of Brumaire. The reader who views events in regard to their abiding influence on the development of great nations, will probably assign more importance to the Napoleonic re-organisation of France than to the military achievements of this epoch, important as they are. The Consulate (1799–1804) was marked by practical and constructive statemanship of the highest

kind, whereby the young ruler evolved order out of chaos, and activity out of torpor, in the spheres of local government, finance, law, public works, higher education, and religion. But, side by side with this peaceful regeneration of his adopted land, Napoleon, as First Consul and thereafter as Emperor, pushed on ambitious colonial schemes, and brought the States bordering on France more and more under his control. The former of these enterprises led to the renewal of hostilities with England; the latter embroiled him with Russia and Austria in 1805, and with Prussia a year later. Yet his matchless military genius and the strength and enthusiasm of renovated France gave him an easy triumph over all enemies on land, so that he finally dictated terms to the Continent in the Treaty of Tilsit (July 7, 1807). This middle epoch, then, may be said to mark the consummation of a national and constructive policy in France, albeit at the cost of political liberty; while the collision with the moribund systems of Central Europe led to an overwhelming victory for the one State which had utilised all the sources of strength opened up by agrarian reforms and a vigorous administration.

The third epoch (1808–1815) has as its chief characteristic the rise of a strong national feeling in the peoples who suffered under the Napoleonic domination. That sentiment burst forth with unsuspected strength in Spain even when, in the summer of 1808, she lay at the feet of the Emperor's legions. In the following year the Hapsburg Empire sought to arouse its subjects to the same energy; and though its organized effort failed, the heroic deeds of the Tyrolese, under Hofer, showed what might be achieved under determined leaders. The peoples in part of North Germany also struggled to cast off the French yoke; but as yet the teachings of patriotic thinkers and the reforms of enlightened statesmen had imparted the desire, but not the needed strength, for a struggle with Napoleon at the height of his power. Meanwhile, however, his Continental System, framed with a view to the ruin of British commerce, was ever goading the peoples of Europe to deeper hatred against its contriver. Russia was the first to renounce Napoleon's fiscal decrees; and the disasters which in 1812 beset his effort to re-impose the hated yoke, furnished to the peoples of Central Europe the long wished for opportunity. The campaigns of 1813, 1814 and 1815 bore witness to the strength of the national feeling which had been aroused; and the events of those wars resulted in the establishment of States more nearly conterminous with the boundaries of peoples than at any previous time in Modern History.

In the brief limits assigned to this Prefatory Note, it is impossible to do more than point out some of the less obvious but really important forces which helped to mould the course of events in these three lesser epochs.

Modern research has tended increasingly to emphasise the fact of the radical weakness of the first three Coalitions formed against France. The "star" of Napoleon Bonaparte never shone more auspiciously than at his entry into the lists of the nations at the very time when the once formidable First Coalition was rapidly mouldering away. From the first the disputes of Austria, Prussia and Russia over the spoils of Poland had clogged their effort against the French Republic. The despairing efforts of the Poles under Kosciusko, served to fan their jealousies to a flame at the close of the year 1794. Prussia, foiled in her efforts to gain her fair share in the third partition (1795), came to terms with France in the month of April; and Russia and Austria thenceforth became more intent on schemes of aggrandisement in Turkey, Bavaria, and Venetia, than on the barren struggle with

France. The Czarina, Catherine II., had always sought to busy the Central Powers beyond the Rhine in order that she might have a free hand in Polish and Turkish affairs; and her neighbours, divining the truth, never threw their whole weight against the French. This was the case especially in the years 1794–1795. It is scarcely too much to say that the death struggle of the Poles brought life and safety to the Revolutionary movement in the West.

Further, as Spain made peace with the regicide Republic in July, 1795, the land forces of the First Coalition were limited practically to those of Austria and Sardinia. These, too, were weakened by a cause that is little known. After the establishment of the Directory at Paris, Pitt deemed the time favourable for an attempt at a peaceful compromise with the now definitely constituted Republic; and, during the discussions with the Court of Vienna as to the terms which should be offered to France, he even ventured to defer the payment of the subsidies on which Austria and Sardinia counted for the effective prosecution of the struggle. Their protests to the British Government show that they were sorely in need of the sinews of war at the very time when Bonaparte was about to carry out his masterly plan of operations in the gap between the Maritime Alps and the Apennines (April, 1796). Consequently, the allies, ill prepared to withstand his trenchant strokes, were sundered in the first week of the campaign; and the Austrians, losing the support of Sardinia, were left with no other good base of supplies than Mantua. The defection of Sardinia, on the other hand, made the French independent of the supplies previously drawn from France by the coast road through Loano, which had been exposed to Nelson's attacks. Nevertheless, much indirect help might have been given by the British fleet in the Mediterranean and Adriatic, especially during the long siege of Mantua, had not the recent declaration of war by Spain against England necessitated the withdrawal of the British squadrons to the Spanish coasts (November, 1796). The Hapsburg Government afterwards complained that their departure was fatal to the Austrian plans for the relief of Mantua; exaggerated though that complaint may be, it is undeniable that the change in the policy of Spain, as earlier in that of Prussia, together with the ill-timed parsimony of Pitt, greatly helped to produce a situation in which the genius of Bonaparte could shine with the utmost splendour.

The campaign of 1796 opened the "gold mine" of Italy (the phrase is Nelson's) to the French, replenished their finances, and, besides furnishing the means, stimulated the desire to extend their conquests in other directions. The troops of the Republic had already gained the "natural frontiers"—the Rhine, Alps, Pyrenees, and the Ocean. Bonaparte carried the tricolour to the first decisive conquests beyond those frontiers. The halo of romance that encircled his Egyptian Expedition, gaining in brilliance by contrast with the mean and oppressive policy of the Directory after Fructidor 1797, ensured the victory of militarism over parliamentary institutions in France. The result was seen two years later at Brumaire, when the triumph of the general over the deputies of France gave effect to the dogma set forth by Rousseau in the *Contrat Social*.—"If the danger is such that the formal process of law is an "obstacle to our security, a supreme head is nominated, who may silence "all the laws and suspend for a moment the sovereign authority."—In this case, the suspension of popular sovereignty was more than temporary, for it came through the action of a man whose elemental strength of will was destined to fulfil that strangely prophetic utterance of the Genevese

philosopher respecting Corsica—"I have some presentiment that this small island will one day astonish Europe."

The man who figured as the militant Messiah of Rousseau's evangel, united warlike gifts that had been sharpened by generations of vendetta strifes in Corsica, with civic and diplomatic instincts traceable to the life of his Ghibelline forefathers when domiciled at Florence. This union of powers, more harmonious and potent than had been seen since the time of Cæsar, served to fascinate and enthrall a generation which had been weakened by civil strifes; and the victor wisely used his triumph with a moderation that promised to heal the wounds caused by revolutionary fanatics, and to build up a truly national fabric on the foundations laid down in 1789. By the Concordat he made good the rent in the religious life of France. The Civil, or Napoleonic, Code, imparted to French law its symmetrical outlines; and other reforms, financial and administrative, built up the powerful machinery which has survived all the changes on the surface of the nation's life.

But Napoleon was not wholly immersed in these beneficent tasks. Beyond the seas he sought to secure control over Central Australia and the Cape of Good Hope, to recover Egypt, and to prepare for a Franco-Mahratta alliance that should oust the British from India. Equally bold and farseeing were his plans for Louisiana and Hayti, which, but for the renewal of war with England, might have altered the balance of power in North America. In Europe the pressure of his diplomacy ensured the virtual subjection of Holland, North Italy, and Switzerland. The result was, first, the rupture of the peace of Amiens (never much more than a truce), and thereafter the gradual re-opening of the whole European struggle. Again it should be noted that the Central Powers were distracted by jealousies arising from the confiscation of the clerical States, knightly domains, and smaller Free Cities of Germany. This sweeping change, known as the Secularisations (February-March, 1803), weakened the European fabric for a time, and, like the partitions of Poland in the previous decade, rendered any accord between the despoiling Powers exceedingly difficult. Even the task of bringing Russia, England, and Austria to an agreement occupied more than a year. Every effort to bring Prussia betimes into the Third Coalition failed; and the South German States took the side of Napoleon, who in the Secularisations had championed their interests. The result is well known. Old Germany received its death blow at Austerlitz; the Holy Roman Empire made way for Napoleon's Confederation of the Rhine; and Prussia, after letting slip the golden opportunity offered by Fortune shortly before Austerlitz, drew the sword against France ten months after the overthrow of the Hapsburg Power. In the spring of the year 1807, when the frightful slaughter at Eylau again made the issue of events doubtful, Austria imitated the tame and dilatory policy of her rival in 1805. The result was the triumph of Napoleon and the imposition of his Continental System successively on all the States of the Continent, with the single exception of Turkey.

Doubtless it was the weakness of the European fabric and the slowness of "the old Coalition machines," as he termed them, which lured on Napoleon to the fatal enterprises of his later years. His mistake in treating the House of Spain as a negligible quantity was quite natural. No Court was so despised as that of Madrid; and the gratitude felt by influential Germans for the introduction of Napoleonic reforms seemed to warrant the belief that Spain might be peacefully renovated by a greater than Charlemagne. But here, as elsewhere, the forceful and overbearing methods

used by the Emperor made all accommodation impossible. The Spaniards rushed to arms; and the surrender of a French army at Baylen (July 19, 1808) marked the incoming of a new *motif* into the symphony of European development.

Already in Prussia, thinkers and statesmen had seen the need of rebuilding the State on a truly national basis. Within sound of the drums of the French garrison at Berlin, the philosopher Fichte, spoke forth his "Addresses to the German Nation" (1807–1808), wherein he bade his countrymen lay aside the petty and selfish aims which had been their ruin and devote themselves to the task of regenerating the Fatherland. Above all, he pleaded for an enlightened system of education that would bind together all classes and districts in a new and higher union. The reform of the Gymnasia, or public schools, the founding of the University of Berlin (1810) and the formation of the "Tugendbund" gave effect to his teaching. Even more important were the reforms of the great statesman, Stein. In the years 1807–1808 the liberation of the serfs, the grant of electoral institutions to towns, and the sweeping away of feudal and class restrictions from land holding and other occupations, brought new life to downtrodden Prussia. Service in the national army was made obligatory on all ablebodied men; and Hardenberg carried in 1811 a measure which made the peasants absolute owners of nearly the whole of the plots previously held on a feudal tenure. The result was seen in the astounding efforts put forth by Prussia in the "War of Liberation" (1813).

At the beginning of that year the wreckage of Napoleon's "Grand Army" drifted back helplessly from the steppes of Russia. The Emperor's effort to reimpose the yoke of the Continental System on that land had ended in a disaster never equalled in historic times; and the peoples of Central Europe successively rose against him. The campaigns of 1813, 1814, and 1815 derive a unique interest from the personality and achievements of Napoleon, Blücher, Gneisenau, and Wellington, worthy representatives and champions of France, North Germany, Great Britain and the peoples of the Iberian Peninsula. The success of the allies led inevitably to the return of the Greater France of 1810 to her old historic limits; but it did not lead to the effective grouping of the Germans and other peoples. The Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) made many serious mistakes. Nevertheless the European fabric gained greatly in strength; and the imperfection of the arrangements made at Vienna respecting Germany, Italy, Belgium and Poland was destined to lead to popular movements which determined the course of European history in the half-century that followed.

APPENDIX B

THE LITERATURE AND HISTORIANS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

By G. F. BARWICK

London University, Assistant Keeper of Printed Books, British Museum

The sources for the history of the French Revolution, upon which the writers named in the Bibliography appended to the present work must chiefly have relied, are the original MSS. in Paris, some seven thousand bundles or parcels, and the collections of pamphlets and books printed during the period of the Revolution which exist in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, and in the British Museum. The printed matter in the Bibliothèque Nationale probably contains some sixty or seventy thousand books, pamphlets and sets, or volumes of periodicals, and the British Museum collections contain nearly fifty thousand among upwards of a quarter of a million publications bearing upon the history of the world. The Paris collection is naturally far richer than the London one, but the latter possesses many interesting pamphlets not represented in the former.

And yet the world does not possess all that was written at that extraordinary time, for enormous collections of documents, chiefly MSS. of which no other copies existed, perished in the flames during the excesses of the Commune in 1871. Among these were the official records and collections of the Ministère des Finances and of the Préfecture de Police, save that in the case of the latter a few parcels of exceptional interest were placed for safety in a small dungeon, and thus escaped destruction. But the greatest loss of all was that of the municipal documents of Paris, which together with a vast mass of papers relating to the corporations and clubs, were sent in 1796 to the Bureau Central of the Canton of Paris. These practically represented the bulk of the documents relating to the Préfecture of the Seine, and it is a most regrettable circumstance that not even a list of them was made. Consequently when the buildings of the Avenue Victoria were burned in 1871, not a single fragment of the social revolutionary history of Paris escaped, and nothing is known of those documents save the mere numbers of the packages or bundles.

Before considering the use which various historians have made of these immense stores, we must bear in mind that until recently considerable sections of the MSS. were very difficult of access, especially those in the Départements des Affaires étrangères, de la Marine and de la Guerre, and also that local administrative and ecclesiastical documents, at one time collected together in the capital, were transferred to the chief town of each

district, and again to the chief town of the department. Removals are always bad, but these were not merely conducted with extreme negligence, but additional losses were incurred through accident and robbery.

With the official acts and papers must be reckoned the *Moniteur*, that great gazette of the daily life of the Revolution, wherein its throes are briefly registered from day to day, and these records keep the student in touch with the movement as a whole and indicate the directions which his researches should take. The journalistic press of course teemed with newspapers and periodicals of every sort, but the majority of them are what Carlyle called "windbags," mere flies on the wheels of Juggernaut.

From these one turns with pleasure to the more "human documents" of personal memoirs. Among the most interesting for the period just preceding the Revolution are the gossipy and voluminous Memoirs of the Duc de Saint Simon, and the Journal of the Duc de Luynes, both of them courtiers *par excellence*, to whom no detail concerning royalty or rank was too trivial to record, and who reveal the inner life of the court of Louis XV. with great minuteness. Of higher scope and character are the Memoirs and Journals of their contemporary, the Marquis d'Argenson, to whom politics and public affairs were more interesting than court scandal and the tittle-tattle of the royal antechamber. Practically continuing the narrative of Saint Simon, though of course on entirely different lines, is the Journal of Barbier, which lay for a long time in MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and was only published in 1847. It is no work of talent, the style is ordinary, the repetitions frequent and the author's intellectual standard quite mediocre, likewise all that he relates is at second hand, but nevertheless his journal remains a most careful and credible record, and alone fills the gap between Saint Simon and Bachaumont. The latter was a littérateur whose memoirs fill up the short interval between Barbier and the Revolution. The correspondence of Madame Du Deffand, who died in 1780, is also of unusual interest and covers a long period.

The works of a man of the next generation, the Marquis de Mirabeau, father of the great orator of the Revolution, throw valuable light upon the economic conditions of the country. An original thinker he advocated simplicity in central government, and the delegation of local power to the provinces: he was perhaps the chief founder of the school of economists identified with the name of Turgot in France, and Adam Smith in England.

The first of the actual memoirs of the time is the *Histoire de la Révolution de France. Par Deux Amis de la Révolution* (1791–1803). The two friends are Kerverseau and Clavelin, the former a lawyer and the latter a bookseller, their work is careful and somewhat picturesque, but they were not in the inner circle, and saw more of the ripples on the water than of the stones and those who were casting them. The *Caractères* of Chamfort, who at the end of his stormy life was Librarian of the Bibliothèque Nationale in 1792, are a trustworthy source of information so far as they go. Of the Memoirs of the Abbé Soulavie (1802) it must be said that every statement is to be received with the utmost caution; he is a mere compiler, with the recklessness attaching to the born scandalmonger. Those of the Baron de Besenval are full of anecdote, and the scenes pass vividly before us with the general impress of truth upon them, save where the Queen is concerned, but towards her his inflexible animosity is displayed in terms equally ungenerous and unjust. The Memoirs of Marmontel (1804) more those of a dramatist and littérateur than of a historian, are

entirely coloured by the doctrines of Voltaire, his master in all things. A man of entirely different character was Morellet whose *Mélanges de littérature et de philosophie* were published in 1818. A friend of Turgot and Loménie, he was one of the great ornaments of the Economist school, and he records the events of the Revolution without fear or favour, and expresses his disgust at its excesses in no measured terms. The *avocat* Linguet whose *Mémoires sur la Bastille* were published in 1821, is in general a most untrustworthy guide, and his statements cannot be accepted without confirmation. Mercier, the littérateur and politician, who wrote about Paris during the Revolution and after the Revolution, is fairly accurate and often amusing. He utterly despises the bygone times and shows inordinate self conceit, but his faults, if they veil the historical narrative, do not often distort the outline. In the Travels of Arthur Young, 1787–89, we have the particularly valuable observations of an outsider, a man entirely devoted to the interests of agriculture, and whose sole object in traversing France was to make an official report upon the progress of scientific farming in that country. He was free from social or political bias, and the incidental remarks which he makes upon the condition of France at that period are of the greatest interest. The scene of the Massacre at the Abbaye, September 1792, is vividly described in *Mon Agonie* by Jourgniac de Saint Méard, who was present and escaped by marvellous good fortune. He was a light-hearted man about town under the Ancien Régime, and viewed the new state of things much as Sir John Suckling looked upon the Roundheads in 1640. The Marquis de Toulongeon, a distinguished soldier and Deputy to the States General, is the first to give the names to the different periods of the Revolution and the only contemporary writer who deals at all adequately with its military history. The plans and maps which accompany his *Histoire de France*, 1801, are quite excellent. The Swiss publicist Mallet du Pan founded in 1779, at Geneva, the *Mémoirs historiques, politiques, et littéraires*, and in 1783, at Paris, the *Journal historique et politique*, which was afterwards combined with the celebrated *Mercure de France*. In 1792 he fled to London, where he founded the *Mercure Britannique*. These publications are mines of information for the student. In 1822 appeared one of the most notable of all the personal Memoirs about the Revolution, namely, those of Madame Campan. A daughter of one of the chief clerks of the Foreign Office, she was for nearly twenty years first lady of the bedchamber to Marie Antoinette, and had a narrow escape at the storming of the Tuileries in 1792. She afterwards kept a school at St. Germain, and was appointed Superintendent of the School at Ecouen by Napoleon. Her account is most interesting, but it was not written as the events occurred. The number of misstatements in facts and dates make it probable that she compiled her memoirs from rough notes after her retirement to Mantes about 1815. The Memoirs of Carnot are of the highest importance; he was Deputy to the Legislative Assembly and Convention, and War Minister in 1793-95, and for his successful labours in that capacity received the popular sobriquet of "Organiser of Victory." The *Mémoires concernant Marie Antoinette* which bear the name of Joseph Weber, her foster brother, are also trustworthy and of great interest. For although only a portion of the first three chapters is actually by Weber, the book was compiled by Lally-Tollendal from personal papers and particular instructions from Choiseul as to the domestic arrangements of Marie Antoinette both at Vienna and Versailles. Fabre d'Eglantine, who assumed his name from a golden églantine (wild rose), which he received as

a prize at the Jochs Florals at Toulouse, was a follower of Danton and perished with him. His portrait of Marat (1793) is a masterpiece of just appreciation and insight into character. The Memoirs of General Lafayette are those of a man whose sympathies were entirely Republican, for he served as a volunteer in the American army at Brandywine, Monmouth and Yorktown, and enjoyed high office and command when he returned to France, and yet he so violently opposed the Jacobins that he was forced to escape from France in 1792. His nickname "Grandison-Cromwell" is remarkably descriptive of his political attitude. The Swiss scholar Dumont published valuable "*Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*" whose literary coadjutor he had been. He is an enthusiastic follower of Bentham, the celebrated jurist and utilitarian philosopher.

The Journal of Camille Desmoulins is another valuable record, for he was in the very forefront of the movement, and in 1789 his impassioned harangues added fuel to the popular excitement which culminated in the storming of the Bastille. *The Histoire des Crimes de la Révolution* by Prudhomme is very readable, but replete with stories that have no basis of fact. Where he found them is often a mystery, but it must be remembered that he was a bookseller and may have taken notes from some of the many volumes that passed through his hands. In the Memoirs of Fréron (1796) we have far more solid work, for he was a Deputy to the Convention in 1792, and afterwards sub-prefect in Santo Domingo. Thibaudeau was also a Deputy, and was a prominent member of the extreme Revolutionary party *La Montagne;* his *Mémoires sur la Convention et le Directoire* (1824) is a very valuable contribution to the history of those institutions. Mention should also here be made of the reminiscences of Lacretelle entitled *Dix années d'épreuves*, and of his history of the Revolution. The next writer of note is one very familar to English readers, Madame de Stael. The daughter of Necker, and wife of the Swedish Ambassador to France, she enjoyed every opportunity for the development of her literary abilities. Her *Considérations sur la Révolution française* deserve attention not only as literature, but as the work of a singularly well-balanced intellect, somewhat influenced by excessive admiration for the doctrines of Rousseau. The noted Girondist orator Barbaroux also left memoirs, first published in 1822. He had a varied career for he led the Marseilles battalion to the attack on the Tuileries in 1792, was proscribed as a royalist in 1793 and was guillotined at Bordeaux in 1794. His record is fairly trustworthy but does not cover much ground and is essentially the work of an advocate. Somewhat similar are the Memoirs (1815) of that staunch royalist Madame de la Rochejacquelein, who while mainly recording the heroism of those who bore the family name gives many useful details.

For the character of Marie Antoinette the best sources are her own letters, in the authentic collection published by the Austrian historian A. Arneth, Director of Royal Archives at Vienna. Here we find all her letters to Maria Theresa and to Joseph II., and the few others since recovered and published are of quite minor importance.

With the mention of the *Mémoires du Temple* of the Duchesse d'Angoulême, the memoirs of the Marquise de Tourzel, who participated in the flight to Varennes, and the Journal of occurrences at the Temple, by Cléry, the king's valet de chambre, we may terminate the list of writers of the period and pass on to notice a few of the numerous historical writings for which the foregoing documents and memoirs have mainly served as source and material. Sallier's *Annales Françaises*, 1813, are

chiefly interesting as the basis of the better known work of the Abbé Montgaillard *Revue chronologique de l'histoire de France*, a compilation of considerable merit in its day but entirely superseded by the work of later historians. The *Histoire des campagnes de la Révolution* of Baron Jomini, who was aide-de-camp to Marshal Ney, is a monumental work, vast in size, comprehensive and accurate, but it deals only with the military side of the wars. With the *Histoire de la Révolution Française* of President Thiers we reach the first attempt to write a complete general history of the Revolution. The work in spite of many defects was deservedly popular, and went through many editions and was translated into English. Carlyle condemned it as having "a superficial air of order and clearness but inwardly waste, inorganic and singularly false," but the orderly method that Carlyle demanded would not appeal to the French, and Carlyle's history if written in French would hardly have ousted Thiers from the field, a feat reserved for Michelet. Mignet, a fellow student and lifelong friend of Thiers, was the next to bid for laurels by a history of the Revolution. He was a liberal and a philosopher, and his history, published in 1824. was so different in character and treatment from that published by Thiers in the previous year, that there was ample room for both, and Mignet enjoyed a popularity as great or perhaps greater than Thiers. His method is far more rigid, while his style is more enthusiastic. It is a curious fact that Henri Martin began by compiling a "*Histoire de France par les principaux historiens*," which is a series of extracts from the chief chroniclers and historians cleverly strung together. He then devoted his energies to his great work, an original History of France, and devoted several years of patient labour to its completion, and did not rest even then, but revised and recast it for a new edition. It is deservedly one of the standard histories of the country, but the portion devoted to the Revolution does not rise above the ordinary level of good history. In striking contrast to all its predecessors Carlyle's French Revolution is a brilliant attempt to set before English readers the events and characters of that period by new methods. A wonderful vein of ironic humour, the gift of vivid and picturesque expression, and the use of quaint epithets, always striking and often convincing, combined to make that history the one which has most appealed to the English public. It is not perhaps too much to say that even now the great majority of the English speaking people all over the world view the Revolution through Carlyle's glasses, and fortunately even French critics own that it is a just view in the main; for instance Maurice Tourneux speaks of it as "le livre le plus original, sinon le plus équitable" of all the works written outside France. As Sir George Trevelyan has well pointed out, Carlyle possessed "an unrivalled instinct for the detection of men's inmost motives" and this it is which has undoubtedly kept his work alive in spite of its many defects. He hated details of laws and constitutions and consequently his conclusions rest on very insecure foundations at many critical points, while to his leaning towards strong government and his inherent dislike of constitutional methods is due his failure to appreciate the aims and character of the Girondins, and his somewhat excessive harshness towards Louis XV. Carlyle defined history as the essence of innumberable biographies, and his French Revolution is an eminent exposition of that theorem, at the same time his fondness for salient biographical touches led him to accept as true many anecdotes (*e.g.* from Kerverseau and Prudhomme) that further research would have caused him to reject.

Joseph Droz, the moralist and historian, who published the history of the reign of Louis XVI. in 1839, hardly calls for special remark, while of De Tocqueville it is perhaps sufficient to observe that he was possessed with the idea that modern history was a record of progress in the destruction of feudalism, which had been finally abolished by the Revolution. That very voluminous writer Louis Blanc, politician, historian, journalist and socialist, was greatly indebted to the British Museum collections when he was forced to seek refuge in England in 1848, and occupied his enforced leisure in writing a history of the Revolution. His work is popular, and is written in very fluent French, and if wanting in depth and originality, it makes up the deficiency by sincerity and the careful citation of authorities, and there is no guide better furnished, or more trustworthy for a student. In Lamartine (*Histoire des Girondins*, 1847) we have the work of a poet whose mode of expression recalls the Ancien Régime while his sympathies are with his own period. Somewhat turgid and rhetorical his history is more remarkable for its style than for its scholarship. To him the Revolution appeared as a vast upheaval the object of which was to break off the chains that had long confined both body and soul.

In the same year 1847, appeared Michelet's famous "*Précis de la Révolution Française*." He is the only historian who can be placed on the same intellectual level as Carlyle, but while Michelet loved the Revolution with all the fervour of his Celtic nature, Carlyle developed increasing aversion as he proceeded. The pages of Carlyle glitter but those of Michelet glow, especially where he depicts the gentle Spirit of France struggling to break the bonds of slavery, and only driven to cruelty by the force of circumstances, and the heartlessness of the surrounding nations. Barante the historian of the Convention and Directoire, held various offices under the Empire and was an ambassador under Louis Philippe. He writes with the authority of a man who knows the inner working of great offices and institutions; and Duruy, who was Minister of Public Instruction, is also a careful historian of the official type. In George Sand however we have one who wrote of the Revolution (*Histoire de ma vie*) with the most enthusiastic sympathy, and whose advanced republicanism led Louis Blanc to ask her to write prefatory remarks to his history already mentioned. The *Revue de l'histoire universelle* of Prevost-Paradol is also a work of considerable interest for the period dealing with the French Revolution; he was a journalist and a violent opponent of Napoleon III. Turning for a moment to some of the foreign historians we note the History of the Eighteenth century by Schlösser which treats the Revolution with Teutonic thoroughness not to say heaviness; the same may be said of Weber's General History and of Häusser's History of the Revolution, save that the former is more literary and the latter more political in character. *The Essays on the periods of the French Revolution* by John Wilson Croker deserve special mention, as the work of the man who formed the most important of the fine collections of pamphlets now in the British Museum, the materials that proved so useful to Louis Blanc and that called forth the energies of Carlyle. A good general history is that of Eyre Evans Crowe, and his views on the Revolution are sound, but his book does not rise above the crowd of ordinary histories. Coming back to the more recent French historians, the *Histoire de France* of Dareste de la Chavanne is distinguished from others of the same class by its great accuracy which is especially remarkable in the portion dealing with the Revolution. Dauban's *Démagogie en* 1793-5 *à Paris* is important, as is likewise his able apology

for Madame Roland. But the authors not only of France but of every literary centre in the world, who wrote either on the Revolution as a whole or on some particular figure or incident, become so numerous towards the end of the nineteenth century that space is wanting even to mention them, to say nothing of the discussion of their several merits. Yet the brilliant work of Mortimer Ternaux in the *Histoire de la Terreur* must not be passed over in silence, nor *Les Origines de la France contemporaine* of Taine. The latter applied to the Revolution the method of minute analysis, and casting aside all sentimentality, set himself to ascertain the influence it exerted upon France, and how far it had advanced or retarded her development. A follower of Taine in the application of the scientific method to history is M. Aulard, but he is far more enthusiastic and boldly declares that "to understand the Revolution one must love it." In his *Histoire politique de la Révolution Française* he endeavours to show "how the principles of the Declaration of the Rights of Man were translated into action in 1789–1804 in the institutions of the time or were interpreted in the press and in public speeches and the movements of political parties." His work is of the greatest value for all that relates to laws and constitutions.

In some ways the most remarkable production in modern history is Hamel's *Histoire de Robespierre*, for he finds in his hero the incarnation of every human virtue; and an English writer, Henry Morse Stephens, has done almost the same for Marat. But the latter in his *French Revolution*, though devoid of the picturesqueness of Carlyle, the warmth of Michelet or the martial note of Thiers, expresses himself in clear and sober terms and is content with the attainment of historic truth, and has thus produced a worthy monument of English scholarship.

With this note upon the work of Mr. Morse Stephens I must close this brief sketch, which disclaims all idea of completeness or adequate criticism, for it is merely an endeavour to give some slight idea of the mass of materials for the history of the Revolution and of the chief writers who have hitherto laboured in that field.

APPENDIX C

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO FRENCH HISTORY

I

THE FRENCH CONSTITUTION, 1791

(Presented to the King on Saturday, September 3, 1791)

[Never before or since has the constitution of a country been presented to a monarch under such circumstances as those which marked the solemn acceptance by Louis XVI of that brought to him on September 3, 1791, from the *Assemblée Constituante*. Louis and his family were then prisoners of their people in the city of Paris. Less than three months before they had fled from their capital under conditions which made their safety sure if the flight had been conducted cleverly. Instead, blunder followed blunder, and though Paris was left far behind, by a series of misfortunes that the simplest prudence would have rendered impossible, the Royal Family had been captured when they were within one hour of security from harm. That flight destroyed respect for the King, and the Royal party came back to Paris anticipating the inevitable end. Robespierre, Petion, Buzot, Duport, Barnave, Salles, La Fayette, Baily, were daily and hourly discussing matters of grave importance in the Constituent Assembly, which, with all its faults, gave uniformity of laws throughout the country, organised the national guard, suppressed feudal rights, provided civil and political liberty. That Assembly dissolved on the 30th September, 1791, after having received the acceptance by Louis of the constitution it had adopted.

It is interesting to note that it was on this constitution that the later French constitutions were built, both republican and royalist. This is especially so in the case of the constitution of 1793, which is printed immediately following. Moreover, the constitutions of the years 1814, 1830, and 1875, which appear in the Appendix to Volume XIII, obviously owed their inspiration to this model. Our copy of the present document is derived from a contemporary translation into English which was published in 1791, bearing the following quaint title-page:

"An authentic copy of the French Constitution, as revised and amended by the National Assembly, and presented to the King on the third of September, 1791. Translated from the original, published by order of the National Assembly. To which are added, It being presented to the King, A copy of the King's Letter to the National Assembly, announcing his Acceptance; and the King's taking the Oath in Presence of the Assembly."

If the title-page be quaint, the document itself can lay some claims to quaintness, though its most characteristic feature is its dogmatism—a characteristic of the men by whom the document was prepared.]

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF A MAN AND A CITIZEN

THE Representatives of the people of France formed into a National Assembly, considering that ignorance, forgetfulness, or contempt of the Rights of Men, are the sole causes of public grievances, and of the corruption of Government, have resolved to exhibit, in a solemn Declaration, the natural, unalienable, and sacred Rights of Man; in order that this Declaration, ever present to all the Members of the Social Body, may incessantly

remind them of their rights and of their duties; to the end that the acts of the legislative power, and those of the executive power, being every moment compared with the end of all political institutions, may acquire the more respect; in order also that the remonstrances of the citizens, founded henceforward on simple and incontestable principles, may ever tend to maintain the Constitution, and to promote the general good.

For this reason the National Assembly recognises and declares, in the presence, and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following Rights of a Man and a Citizen:

I. All men are born, and remain, free and equal in rights: social distinctions cannot be founded but on common utility.

II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man: these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance against oppression.

III. The Principle of *Sovereignty* resides essential in the nation: *no body of men*, no *individual*, can exercise an Authority that does not emanate expressly from that source.

IV. *Liberty* consists in the power of doing everything except that which is hurtful to another; hence, the exercise of the natural rights of every man has no other bounds than those that are necessary to ensure to the other members of society the enjoyment of the same rights: those bounds can be determined by the law only.

V. The law has a right to forbid those actions alone that are hurtful to society. Whatever is not forbidden by the law, cannot be hindered; and no person can be constrained to do that which the law ordaineth not.

VI. The law is the expression of the general will: all the citizens have a right to concur personally, or by their representatives, to the formation of the law: it ought to be the same for all, whether it protect, or whether it punish. All citizens being equal in the eye of the law, are equally admissible to dignities, places, and public offices, according to their capacity, and without any other distinction but that of their virtue and their talents.

VII. No man can be accused, arrested, or detained, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which the law hath prescribed. Those who solicit, dispatch, execute, or cause to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought to be punished; but every citizen that is summoned or seized in virtue of the law, ought to obey instantly—he becomes culpable by resistance.

VIII. The law ought to establish such punishments only as are strictly and evidently necessary; and no person can be punished, but in virtue of a law established and promulgated prior to the offence, and legally applied.

IX. Every man being presumed innocent till such time as he has been declared guilty, if it shall be deemed absolutely necessary to arrest a man, every kind of rigour employed, not necessary to secure his person, ought to be severely repressed by the law.

X. No person shall be molested for his opinions, even such as are religious, provided that the manifestation of those opinions does not disturb the public order established by the law.

XI. The free communication of thought, and of opinion, is one of the most precious rights of man. Every citizen, therefore, may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments; subject, however, to answer for the abuse of that liberty, in cases determined by the law.

XII. The guarantee of the Rights of Man and Citizens involves a necessity

of *public force*: this force is then instituted for the advantage of all, and not for the particular utility of those to whom it is confided.

XIII. For the maintenance of the public force, and for the expenses of administration, a Common Contribution is indispensably necessary: this contribution should be equally divided amongst all the citizens, in proportion to their abilities.

XIV. Every citizen has a right, by himself, or by his representatives, to decide concerning the necessity of the public contribution; to consent to it freely, to look after the employment of it, to determine the quantity, the distribution, the collection, and duration.

XV. The Society has a right to demand from every public agent an account of his administration.

XVI. Every society, in which the guarantee of rights is not assured, nor the separation of powers determined, has *no Constitution*.

XVII. Property being a right inviolable and sacred, no person can be deprived of it, except when the public necessity, legally ascertained, shall evidently require it, and on condition of a just and previous indemnification.

The National Assembly, meaning to establish the French Constitution on the principles recognised and declared above, abolishes irrevocably, the institutions that injure liberty and equality of rights.

There is no longer Nobility or Peerage or hereditary Distinctions, or Distinction of Orders, or Feudal Systems, or Patrimonial Jurisdictions, or any of the Titles, Denominations, and Prerogatives derived from them, or any orders of Chivalry, Corporations or Decorations, for which proofs of nobility were required; "or which supposed distinctions of birth,"[1] or any other superiority but that of public officers in the exercise of their functions.

No public office is any longer saleable or hereditary. There is no longer, for any part of the nation, or for any individual, any privilege or exception to the common right of all Frenchmen.

There is no longer Wardenships, or Corporations of Professions, Arts and Crafts.

The law no longer recognises religious vows, or any other engagements contrary to natural rights, or to the Constitution.

PART I.—FUNDAMENTAL DISPOSITIONS GUARANTEED BY THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution guarantees, as Natural and Civil Rights—

1. That all citizens are admissible to places and employments without any distinction but that of ability and virtue.

2. That all contributions shall be divided equally among all citizens, in proportion to their means.

3. That the same crimes shall be subject to the same punishments, without any distinction of persons.

The Constitution in like manner guarantees, as natural and civil rights, Liberty to all men of going, staying, or departing, without being arrested, or detained, but according to the forms prescribed by the Constitution; Liberty to all men of speaking, writing, printing, and "publishing their thoughts," without "having their writings subjected to any examination or inspection before publication"; and of exercising the religious worship to which they are attached;

[1] Those portions of the document printed within inverted commas, represent alterations or additions to the original draft.]

Liberty to all citizens of assembling peaceably, and without arms, complying with the laws of police;

Liberty of addressing to all constitutional authorities petitions individually signed;

"The Legislative Power cannot make laws that infringe or impede the exercise of the natural and civil rights recorded in this part, and guaranteed by the Constitution;" but as liberty consists only in the power of doing whatever neither injures the rights of another, nor the public safety, the law may establish penalties against acts which, attacking either the public safety, or the rights of others, would be injurious to society.

The Constitution guarantees the inviolability of property, or a just and previous indemnity for that of which public necessity, legally proved, shall require the sacrifice.

The effects destined to the expenses of worship, and services of public utility, belong to the Nation, and are at all times at its disposal.

"The Nation preserves and assures the alienations which have been, and which shall be made, according to the forms established by the law."

"The citizens have a right to elect or choose the ministers of their worship."

A general establishment of *public succours* shall be created and organised, "for bringing up deserted children," relieving the infirm poor, and providing work "for the poor not infirm, who cannot procure it for themselves."

A *Public Instruction* shall be created and organised, common to all citizens, gratuitous with regard to those parts of tuition indispensable for all men, and of which the establishment shall be gradually distributed in a proportion combined with the division of the Kingdom.

"National festivals shall be established to preserve the memory of the French Revolution, maintain fraternity among the citizens, and attach them to their country and the laws."

"A Code of Civil Law shall be framed for the Common use of the whole Kingdom."

PART II.—OF THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM, AND THE STATE OF CITIZENS

I. "The kingdom is one and indivisible;" its territory, for Administration, is distributed into eighty-three Departments, each Department into Districts, each District into Cantons.

II. Those are French Citizens—

Who are born in France of a French father;

Who having been born in France of a foreign father, have fixed their residence in the kingdom;

Who having been born in a foreign country, of a French father, have returned to settle in France, and have taken the Civic Oath.

In fine, who have been born in a foreign country, being descended in whatever degree from a Frenchman or Frenchwoman, who have left their country from religious motives, come to reside in France, and take the Civic Oath.

III. Those who, being born out of the kingdom, of foreign parents, reside in France, become French citizens after five years of continued residence in the kingdom; if, besides, they have acquired real property, or married a Frenchwoman, or formed "an agricultural or" Commercial establishment, and if they have taken the Civic Oath.

IV. The Legislative Power may, for important considerations, naturalise

a foreigner, upon no other condition, than that of residing in France, and taking the Civic Oath.

V. The Civic Oath is:—I swear to be faithful to the Nation, the Law, and the King; and to maintain with all my power, the Constitution of the Kingdom, decreed by the Constituting National Assembly during the years 1789, 1790, and 1791.

VI. The right of French Citizenship is lost—

1st. By naturalisation in a foreign country;

2nd. By being condemned to penalties which involve the Civic degradation, provided the person condemned be not reinstated.

3rd. By a sentence of Contumacy, provided the sentence be not annulled;

4th. By initiation into any foreign Order or Body which supposes either proofs of Nobility "or distinctions of Birth, or requires religious vows."

VII. "The Law considers marriage as a Civil Contract only. The Legislative Power will establish for all inhabitants, without distinction, the mode by which births, marriages, and deaths shall be proved, and it will point out the public officers who shall receive and preserve the authentication of them."

VIII. French citizens regarded in the light of those local relations which arise out of their association in cities, and in certain divisions of territory in the country, from the *Communities*.

The Legislative Power may fix the extent of boundary of each Community.

IX. The Citizens who compose each Community have the right of choosing, from time to time, according to the forms prescribed by the law, those among them who, under the name of *Municipal Officers*, are charged with the management of the particular affairs of the Community.

To the Municipal Officers may be delegated certain functions relative to the general interest of the State.

X. The rules which the Municipal Officers shall be bound to follow in the exercise, both of the Municipal functions, and of those which shall be delegated to them for the general interest, shall be fixed by the laws.

PART III.—OF THE PUBLIC POWERS

I. The Sovereignty is one, indivisible, "inalienable and imprescriptible," and it belongs to the Nation: no section of the People, or individual, can arrogate the exercise of it.

II. The Nation, from which alone flow all powers, cannot exercise them but by delegation.

The French Constitution is representative: the Representatives are the Legislative Body and the King.

III. The Legislative Power is delegated to a National Assembly composed of temporary Representatives, freely chosen by the people, to be exercised by this Assembly, with the sanction of the King, in manner afterwards determined.

IV. The Government is monarchial: the Executive Power is delegated to the King, to be exercised under his authority, by Ministers and other responsible agents, in manner afterwards determined.

V. The Judicial Power is delegated to Judges chosen from time to time by the people.

II

THE NEW CONSTITUTION OF FRANCE, 1793

[A new constitution came in 1793, the year after the Commune, the September massacres, and the trial of the King—the year in the opening month of which Louis XVI was executed. This constitution was drawn up by a committee, which included Condorcet and Thomas Paine. It was formally approved, but was never put into actual operation. The excesses in France were for a brief period calmed by the discussion of the new constitution, the third constitution which had been framed in four years. The inauguration of this declaration was made the occasion of a wonderful *fête*. The Rights of Man were written on tablets, and the constitution was enclosed in an ark, and these were carried as holy relics into the midst of the convention. After the suppression of the French Academies the constitutions directed the foundation of a National Institute. This was organised in 1795, and was at first composed of three classes, which in 1816 became four academies. Since 1832 there have been five: (1) Académie Française, (2) Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, (3) Académie des Sciences, (4) Académie des Beaux-Arts, (5) Académie des Sciences, Morales, et Politiques. Our copy of this document is derived from a scarce pamphlet printed in London in 1793 under the title of "The New Constitution of France. Literally Translated from the Original Copy presented to the People of France for their consideration."]

PLAN OF THE DECLARATION OF THE NATURAL, CIVIL, AND POLITICAL RIGHTS OF MEN

THE object of all union of men in society, being the maintaining of natural, civil, and political rights, these rights ought to be the basis of the Social compact. The acknowledgment and declaration of them ought to precede the constitution which assures the guarantee of them.

I. The natural, civil, and political rights of men are liberty, equality, security, property, the social guarantee, and resistance of oppression.

II. Liberty consists in the power of doing whatever is not contrary to the rights of others. Thus the exercise of the natural rights of every man has no bounds, but those which secure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights.

III. The conservation of liberty depends on submission to the law, which is the expression of the general will. Whatever is not forbidden by the law cannot be hindered; and no one can be constrained to do what it does not ordain.

IV. Every man is free to manifest his thoughts and his opinions.

V. The liberty of the press, or any other mode of publishing his thoughts, can neither be interdicted, nor suspended, nor limited.

VI. Every citizen is free in the exercise of his worship.

VII. Equality consists in this, that every one may enjoy the same rights.

VIII. The Law ought to be equal for all, whether it rewards or punishes, whether it protects or represses.

IX. All citizens are admissible to all public places, employments, and functions. People that are free acknowledge no motives of preference but talents and virtues.

X. Security consists in the protection granted by the society to every citizen for the conservation of his person, of his property, and of his right.

XI. No one can be tried, accused, apprehended, or detained, but in cases

determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed. Every other act exercised against a citizen is arbitrary and null.

XII. Those who shall solicit, expedite, sign, execute, or cause to be executed, these arbitrary acts, are culpable, and ought to be punished.

XIII. The citizens against whom it shall be attempted to execute such acts have the right to repel force by force; but every citizen summoned, or seized by the authority of the law, and in the forms prescribed by it, ought instantly to obey: he renders himself culpable by resistance.

XIV. Every man being presumed innocent till he has been declared guilty, if it be judged indispensable to apprehend him, all rigour, not necessary for securing his person, ought to be severely repressed by the law.

XV. No one ought to be punished but by virtue of a law established, promulgated anterior to the offence, and legally applied.

XVI. The law which should punish offences committed before its existence would be an arbitrary act. The retrospective effect given to the law is a crime.

XVII. The law ought to pronounce only punishments strictly and evidently necessary to the general security. They ought to be proportioned to offences, and useful to society.

XVIII. The right of property consists in this: that every man has the power to dispose at his pleasure of his effects, of his capital, of his revenues, and his industry.

XIX. No kind of labour, of commerce, of culture, can be forbidden him; he may manufacture, sell, and transport every species of production.

XX. Every man may engage his services, his time; but he cannot sell himself: his person is not an alienable property.

XXI. No one can be deprived of the least portion of his property without his consent, except when public necessity, legally proved, evidently requires it; and on condition of a just and previous indemnity.

XXII. No contribution can be established but for the general utility, and to supply the public wants. All the citizens have the right to concur personally, or by their representatives, in the establishment of contributions.

XXIII. Elementary instruction is the want of all; and the society owes it equally to all its members.

XXIV. Public succours are a sacred debt of the society; and it belongs to the law to determine the extent and application of them.

XXV. The social guarantee of these rights rests on the national Sovereignty.

XXVI. This Sovereignty is one, indivisible, imprescriptible, and inalienable.

XXVII. It resides essentially in the whole people, and every citizen has the equal right to concur in the exercise of it.

XXVIII. No partial union of citizens, and no individual, can arrogate the sovereignty, nor exercise any authority, nor fill any function, without a formal delegation of the law.

XXIX. The social guarantee cannot exist where the limits of the public functions are not clearly determined by the law, and where the responsibility of all the public functionaries is not assured.

XXX. All the citizens are bound to concur in this guarantee, and to give force to the law when they are called upon in its name.

XXXI. Men united in society ought to have a legal means of resisting oppression.

XXXII. It is oppression when a law violates the natural, civil, and political rights which it ought to guarantee. It is oppression when the law is violated by the public functionaries in its application to individual facts. It is oppression when arbitrary acts violate the rights of citizens against the expression of the law.

In every free government the mode of resistance to those different acts of oppression ought to be regulated by the law.

XXXIII. A people have always the right to revise, to reform, and to change their Constitution. One generation has not the right to subject future generations to its laws, and everything hereditary in its functions is absurd and tyrannical.

In whatever place a French citizen resides he may be elected to all the places, and by all the departments, even though he should be for the moment deprived of the right of suffrage by default of residence.

[*For other documents relating to French history see the Appendixes to Volumes XI and XIII.*]

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[b] Sir W. F. P. Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and in the South of France.* — [c] H. Martin, *op. cit.* — [d] J. White, *op. cit.* — [e] V. Duruy, *Histoire de France.* — [f] Simon Kaiser, *Französische Verfassungsgeschichte von 1789.* — [g] L. P. E. Bignon, *op. cit.* — [h] Victor Pierre, *Histoire de la République de 1848.* — [i] C. Dareste de la Chavanne, *op. cit.* — [j] Louis de Viel-Castel, *Histoire de la Restauration.* — [k] Baron de Norvins, *op. cit.* — [l] Baron Jomini, *Vie politique et militaire de Napoléon.* — [m] Friedrich Müffling, *Geschichte des Feldzugs der Armee unter Wellington und Blücher, 1815.* — [n] Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables.* — [o] A. Alison, *op. cit.* — [p] Karl W. von Grolman und Damitz, *Geschichte des Feldzugs 1815 in den Niederlanden.* — [q] J. B. A. Charras, *op. cit.* — [r] J. R. Seeley, *op. cit.* — [s] A. de Vaulabelle, *Ligny-Waterloo, 1815.* — [t] Comte Foy, *Histoire des guerres de la Péninsule sous Napoléon.* — [u] H. Maxwell, *Life of Wellington.* — [v] Comte de Las Cases, *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène.* — [w] C. F. Antommarchi, *Les derniers moments de Napoléon.* — [x] Lord Rosebery, *Napoleon: The Last Phase.* — [y] A. de Lamartine, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848.* — [z] Edmond Schérer, *Études critiques sur la littérature contemporaine.* — [bb] Jules Barni, *Napoléon et son historien, M. Thiers.*

A CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY OF FRANCE FROM 1715 A.D. TO 1815 A.D.

(*For the previous chronology of French history see Vol. XI, page* 679.)

The age of Louis XIV. represents the highest development of the French bourgeoisie, which produced, within half a century, Colbert, Corneille, Pascal, Molière, Racine, La Fontaine, Boileau, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Arnauld, Nicole, Domat, Fabert, Poussin, Lasueur, Lorraine, the Perraults, and Puget. The language, the fashions, and the ideas of France invaded all Europe.

1715 Death of Louis XIV; accession of Louis (XV) the Well-Beloved, under the regency of the Duke of Orleans.
1716 John Law's bank established, in spite of opposition. It is presently adopted by the state.
1717 Formation of a Triple Alliance by France, England, and Holland to resist the Spanish minister, Alberoni. Creation of Law's Mississippi Company (*Compagnie d'Occident*).
1718 Plot of the Spanish party to assassinate the regent. *Compagnie des Indes* formed; the Royal Bank founded. The emperor joins the Triple Alliance, forming the Quadruple Alliance.
1719 War with Spain, owing to the ambition of the Spanish minister, Alberoni.
1720 Alberoni yields to the Quadruple Alliance, and the war ends. The "Mississippi Bubble" bursts.
1721 Dubois made cardinal. He steadily increases his influence and power.
1722 Coronation of Louis; Dubois prime minister.
1723 Louis' majority proclaimed. Deaths of the regent and Cardinal Dubois. Duke de Bourbon prime minister.
1725 Louis marries Marie Leszcynska, daughter of Stanislaus, the fugitive King of Poland.
1726 Fleury, bishop of Fréjus, prime minister. Restoration of confidence both at home and abroad.
1733 The war of the Polish Succession begins. Berwick takes Kehl and lays siege to Philippsburg.
1734 Villars and Charles Emmanuel lay siege to Milan. Novara, Arona, and Tortona surrender to them. Death of Villars at Turin. Berwick killed at the siege of Philippsburg.
1735 Peace congress opened at Vienna. End of war of Polish Succession.
1738 The French assist the Genoese in Corsica. Great distress among the peasants.
1740 The French retain their hold on Corsica.
1741 The First Silesian War (the Austrian Succession) begins. France joins Prussia by the Treaty of Nymphenburg. A French army enters Bohemia. Prague is captured.
1742 Frederick II makes peace with Maria Theresa. The French, left alone in Bohemia, are forced to retreat from Prague.
1743 Death of Fleury. French defeated at Dettingen; the "*Journée des Batons Rompus.*"
1744 Vigorous renewal of the war (sometimes called Second Silesian War) by a league against France formed at Frankfort. Failure of French expedition to Scotland to support the young Pretender. In Flanders, Marshal Saxe captures several towns. Louis has severe illness at Metz; on his recovery he is called "the Well-Beloved." Indecisive naval battle between French and English off Toulon.
1745 Marshal Saxe takes Tournay and defeats the English and Dutch at Fontenoy and Antoin. The Austrian Netherlands fall into his hands. Victory of Bassignano. In America the English take Louisburg and Cape Breton from the French. Maria Theresa makes

Peace of Dresden with the king of Prussia. End of the Second Silesian War, leaving France practically isolated.
1746 The French and Spaniards defeated at Piacenza. Saxe wins victory at Raucoux. In India Labourdonnais and Dupleix take Madras from the English. English invade Provence; forced by Marshal Belle-Isle to withdraw. Madame de Pompadour becomes mistress of Louis.
1747 Saxe wins victory of Lawfeld from the English. Count de Löwendahl takes Bergen-op-Zoom, and Holland is invaded by the French. Great defeat of the French fleet by Admiral Hawke off Belle-Île.
1748 Dupleix repulses English from Pondicherry. Peace concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen). England and France mutually restore their conquests. France enters on a period of great commercial prosperity.
1751 Clive defeats Dupleix and his Indian allies at Arcot. The École Militaire established at Paris.
1753 Beginning of quarrel between parliament of Brittany and the duke d'Aiguillon. Exile of the magistrates of the parliament of Paris for interference in religious matters.
1754 Dupleix recalled from India. His successor Godeheu makes a truce with the English. George Washington with English and Indian troops is sent from Virginia into the Ohio valley and takes possession of Fort Necessity. Jumonville, sent by Villiers to demand its evacuation, is surprised and killed. Villiers besieges Fort Necessity and obliges Washington to surrender. The French and Indian War begins. The king imposes silence on parliament on questions of religion.
1755 England prepares for war on France. Admiral Boscawen captures two French ships. Defeat of Braddock. The French defeated on Lake George.
1756 France allies herself with Austria and Russia—"Alliance of the Three Petticoats." The Seven Years' War begins. French fleet defeats Admiral Byng and takes Port Mahon. French defeat on the Onondaga, but Montcalm takes Fort Oswego.
1757 France declares war on Frederick the Great and joins the league, composed of Russia, Saxony, the German diet, and Sweden, against him. French army under D'Estrées defeats the English under the duke of Cumberland at Hastenbeck. The French occupy Hanover, Göttingen, and Cassel. Richelieu drives the English to the Elbe, and Cumberland surrenders to him at Closter-Seven. Frederick the Great defeats Soubise at Rossbach. English fleet repulsed at La Rochelle. In America, Montcalm captures Fort William Henry. War resumed in India. Clive captures Chandarnagar. Attempt of Damiens to assassinate Louis XV.
1758 English expel French from Emden. Ferdinand of Brunswick dislodges Clermont from Brunswick, defeats him at Crefeld, and takes Düsseldorf. Soubise wins battles of Sondershausen and Lützelberg and takes Cassel. Admiral Osborne defeats Duquesne off Cartagena. English fleets ravage the French coast, and capture Cherbourg. English defeated in an attack at St. Malo. In America Fort Duquesne, Louisburg, and Cape Breton are taken by the English, but General Abercrombie is repulsed at Ticonderoga. English capture Fort Louis in Senegal and drive the French from Gorée. General Lally sails for India; his ships are defeated by Admiral Pococke. On arrival he besieges and captures Fort St. David and besieges Madras.
1759 Disastrous year for France. The duke de Broglie defeats Ferdinand of Brunswick and the English at Bergen; but Ferdinand and the English win at Minden. The French evacuate Hanover and Hesse. Failure of a French attempt to invade England. Le Havre bombarded by an English fleet. Admiral Boscawen defeats Admiral La Clue in Lagos Bay. Admiral Conflans defeated by Admiral Hawke in Quiberon Bay, and his fleet destroyed. In America the French lose Fort Niagara, Ticonderoga, and Crown Point. General Wolfe defeats the French on the Heights of Abraham. Montcalm and Wolfe slain. Surrender of Quebec. Admiral Pococke defeats a French fleet near Mauritius.
1760 A French fleet under Thurot is captured. The French regain Marburg and win at Korbach; lose at Warburg; win at Kloster Camp. English conquest of Canada completed. In India, the English take the offensive and win most of the French towns.
1761 The French armies defeated by Ferdinand at Vellinghausen. English fleet captures Belle-Île. Choiseul arranges the "Family Compact," an offensive and defensive league signed by all the Bourbon sovereigns—France, Spain, the Two Sicilies, Parma, and Piacenza. Surrender of Pondicherry, the last French stronghold in India.
1762 Defeat of the Hanoverians by the French at Johannisburg. Martinique surrenders to the English fleet. Further conquests stopped by peace negotiations.
1763 Treaty of peace signed at Paris ends France's part in the Seven Years' War.
1764 The Jesuits suppressed in France. Death of Madame de Pompadour.
1765 Death of the dauphin; the title passing to his son, afterwards Louis XVI. Arrest and imprisonment of La Chalotais by the duke d'Aiguillon.
1766 Duchy of Lorraine reunited to France.
1768 France acquires Corsica.
1769 Birth of Napoleon Bonaparte in Corsica.

1770 Trial of d'Aiguillon by the parliament of Paris. Louis XV revokes its decision. Through influence of Madame du Barry, the king's new mistress, Choiseul is dismissed. Marriage of the dauphin and Marie Antoinette of Austria.
1771 Suppression of the parliaments of France. The chancellor Manpeou forms a new parliament in Paris, which bears his name. Reconstruction of the provincial parliaments.
1774 Death of Louis XV, succeeded by his grandson **Louis XVI.** Turgot, minister of finances, proposes radical reforms and the abolition of privileges.
1775 Beginning of a three years' famine in France.
1776 Turgot replaced by Necker. Franklin solicits aid for the American colonies.
1777 Treaty of alliance between France and the American colonies.
1778 Treaty of offence and defence signed with the American colonies; their independence recognised. A fleet sent to America. England declares war on France. Indecisive naval contest off Ushant. The French seize Dominica and the English St. Lucia in the West Indies. The English seize Pondicherry in India, and St. Pierre and Miquelon in North America.
1779 Spain joins France. French attack on Jersey repulsed. The French take St. Vincent and Granada in the West Indies. The English seize Senegal and Gorée in Africa. Admiral D'Estaing repulsed at Savannah, Georgia. The French attack Gibraltar. Peace of Teschen.
1780 Admiral Rodney defeats the Franco-Spanish fleet and relieves Gibraltar. In the West Indies he defeats Admiral Guichen. French Army sent to America under Rochambeau.
1781 Necker resigns; Joly de Fleury succeeds him. Admiral de Grasse captures Tobago. Rochambeau and the French army take an important part in the victory of Yorktown. Grasse returns to the West Indies and assists Bouillé to recover the Dutch islands taken by the British.
1782 The English garrison at Minorca surrenders. Rodney defeats the French fleet under Grasse off Santo Domingo. Admiral Suffren fights Admiral Hughes, and forms vast plans with Hyder Ali, sultan of Mysore, for the destruction of English domination in India. Gandelour is besieged.
1783 Preliminary peace articles signed; conquests restored in Africa, the East Indies, and America, except Tobago.
1785 Affair of the queen's necklace.
1786 Commercial treaty with England.
1787 Convocation of the Notables. Calonne's plan of reform rejected; he is replaced by Cardinal de Brienne, who insists on Calonne's proposals. Two parties are formed — one of the king, queen, Brienne, and some of the nobility; the other of the duke of Orleans, the bulk of the nobles, and the parliament of Paris: the latter defend privilege; the former is almost willing to abandon the nobility. The people hold their own rights and claims against both. Louis XVI holds a Bed of Justice. The Paris parliament states the forgotten doctrine that the states-general alone may impose taxes, and the king exiles it to Troyes. Parliament recalled to Paris. Louis XVI holds a "royal sitting." The duke of Orleans exiled.
1788 Parliament declares *lettres de cachet* illegal; several members of the Paris parliament arrested. Other parliaments treated the same way. The Breton parliament forms the club afterwards known as the Jacobins. Necker recalled. Second assembly of the Notables.
1789 Election to the states-general, which meet at Versailles May 4th. The *cahiers*, containing demands for reform in all branches of the government, presented. The three orders united into one body called the National Assembly. Oath of the Tennis Court (June 20th). The Constituent Assembly. Necker resigns. The duke of Orleans and forty-six nobles join the assembly. First collision of the troops and the people. The old municipality of Paris is done away with. Fall of the Bastille (July 14th). The emigration of nobles begins. Necker recalled. Abolition of privileges by the assembly, August 4th, and Declaration of the Rights of Man. Freedom of conscience and liberty of the press decreed. Famine in Paris; a mob proceeds to Versailles, attacks the palace, and brings back the king and queen to Paris (October 6th). The assembly follows. Church property taken by the state. Parliament is suspended. Issue of paper money; crown domain and estates of the empire seized by the state.
1790 The marquis de Favras, the first judicially condemned victim of the revolution, is executed. The assembly redivides France into departments. Sale of church lands and civil constitution of the clergy. Grand federation of the Champ de Mars. The assembly abolishes titles of nobility (June 19th). Necker resigns. The king negotiates with the kings of Europe for help.
1791 Death of Mirabeau. Flight and arrest of the king. The Feuillants Club formed of the moderate Jacobins. The constitution completed; the king agrees to it and is re-established in his functions. Treaty of Pillnitz between Prussia and Austria to restore Louis XVI. The constituent assembly dissolves and the legislative holds its first meeting, October 1st. Insurrections in La Vendée and Brittany. Massacres at Avignon, Marseilles, and Aix.

1792 Austria, Prussia, and Sardinia threaten France, which puts three armies in the field. War declared on Austria (April 20th). The French invade Flanders. The Austrians win at Quesnoy and Mons. La Fayette wins at Maubeuge, and Luckner at Menin. The populace invades the Tuileries (June 20th). Brunswick announces his intention of invading France. Insurrection of August 10th. The king seeks refuge in the assembly and is taken to the Temple. The Prussians take Longwy and Verdun. Outrages in Paris; murder of the princess de Lamballe. Kellermann drives the Prussians from Valmy. Dumouriez wins in Flanders. The siege of Thionville raised. The Germans are driven from France. The convention votes the abolition of royalty (September 21st).

THE FIRST REPUBLIC (1792–1804)

The Convention (1792–1795)

The executive power lodged in the committee of the constitution. General Custine takes Speier, Worms, and Mainz. The Austrians repulsed from Lille. Victory of Jemmapes. Belgium conquered. Savoy made a department.
1793 Trial and execution of Louis XVI. The First Coalition of European powers. The convention declares war on England, Holland, and Spain. The empire, Denmark, and Sweden declare war upon it. Dumouriez, defeated at Neerwinden, evacuates Belgium; accompanied by the duke de Chartres takes refuge in the Austrian Camp. Civil war in La Vendée. Committee of public safety established at Paris. Girondist ministry overthrown. The Reign of Terror begins (June 2nd). The English take Tobago and Pondicherry; Santo Domingo occupied. Revolt of Lyons and Marseilles. The Constitution (that of the Year I) drawn up. Assassination of Marat by Charlotte Corday, who is guillotined. The Austrians take Condé and Valenciennes. Mainz surrenders to the Prussians. The levy *en masse* ordered. The Spaniards invade Roussillon. The English take Toulon, but are defeated at Dunkirk. Carnot appointed to conduct the war. Houchard defeats the English at Hondschoote; Brunswick wins at Pirmasens. General Jourdan defeats Coburg at Wattignies. Lyons retaken by the republicans, who show terrible barbarity. Trial and execution of Marie Antoinette, the duke of Orleans, the Girondists, Madame Roland, and Bailly. The convention decrees the worship of the Goddess of Reason. The new calendar introduced. Victory of Brunswick at Kaiserslautern. The French regain Toulon, at the siege of which Napoleon Bonaparte first distinguishes himself. Hoche and Pichegru drive the Austrians across the Rhine. The republic annexes the county of Montbéliard.
1794 The convention decrees the abolition of slavery; the blacks under Toussaint Louverture revolt in Santo Domingo. The Spaniards driven from Roussillon. The English take Martinique and Guadeloupe; and win some success in Belgium. The French win at Mouscron and Turcoing. Robespierre at head of affairs. The revolutionary tribunal commits fearful atrocities. Hébert and others of the Cordelier party, Danton and Camille Desmoulins, put to death. "The Great Terror." General Masséna routs the Piedmontese. The emperor takes Landrécies. Charleroi surrenders and Coburg is defeated at Fleurus, which re-opens the Netherlands to the French. Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse defeated by Lord Howe. Paoli establishes the dominion of Great Britain in Corsica. Fall of Robespierre and his party on the 9th Thermidor (July 27th), followed by the execution of himself and seventy-one of his adherents. The committee of public safety re-established. End of the Reign of Terror. The Jacobin clubs suppressed. Pichegru drives the English behind the Waal; Jourdan the Austrians beyond the Maas and the Rhine, French conquest of Belgium completed. Dugommier victorious in Spain. The French invade Holland. Prussia negotiates for peace.
1795 Pichegru enters Amsterdam and completes conquest of Holland. The Dutch fleet captured in the ice at Texel. Final suppression of the Chouans and the people of La Vendée. The grand duke of Tuscany makes peace with France. Jacobins fail to regain ascendancy (riot of the 12th Germinal). Treaty of Bâle with the king of Prussia, who gives up the provinces on the left bank of the Rhine. The French take Bilboa in Spain, when peace is made. England, Austria, Sardinia, and the empire remain in the coalition. The United Provinces make Holland into the Batavian Republic and make alliance with France. Second insurrection of the Jacobins (1st Prairial) suppressed. Death of Louis XVII in the Temple. His uncle Louis XVIII becomes head of the royalist cause. Luxemburg surrenders to the French. An English fleet and a party of émigrés defeated in Quiberon Bay by Hoche. The émigrés are shot. Düsseldorf and Mannheim taken by the French. Hesse-Cassel and Hanover make peace with the republic. The constitution of 1793 abolished. Constitution of the year III organises the Directory. Bonaparte, recalled by Barras, puts down an insurrection (13th Vendémiaire — October 5th), and gains command of the army of the Interior. All clubs suppressed. The

Austrian Netherlands are united to France. Wurmser recovers Mannheim. Jourdan is defeated at Höchst. The convention ended 4th Brumaire — October 26th.

The Directory (1795–1799)

Jourdan defeated at Mainz. Schérer and Masséna win at Loano in Italy.

1796 Bonaparte made commander-in-chief of the army of Italy. He marries Josephine Beauharnais. Hoche ends the rebellion in La Vendée. Bonaparte wins at Montenotte, Millesimo, and Dego. He crushes the Sardinian army at Mondovi and forces an armistice. Conspiracy of Babœuf betrayed and punished. Bonaparte wins at Piacenza and Lodi. Treaty with Sardinia, giving Savoy to France. The French enter Milan. Bonaparte makes terms with the dukes of Parma and Modena. The Austrians driven back to the Tyrol. Mantua blockaded. Verona, Ferrara, and Bologna occupied. Armistice signed with the pope. Admiral Nelson takes Elba, but the English are forced to abandon Corsica. Wurmser driven from Italy by Napoleon. General Moreau takes Kehl and defeats the Germans at Rastatt and Ettlingen, and the archduke Charles at Neresheim. But the archduke defeats Jourdan at Neumark, Amberg, and Würzburg, and drives him beyond the Lahn. Wurmser reappears in Italy. Bonaparte defeats him at Bassano, shutting him up in Mantua. Peace with Naples. The Cispadane Republic founded. France makes alliance with Tipu Saib and with Spain. Moreau makes a skilful retreat into Alsace, defeating the Austrians at Biberach. Bonaparte wins at Arcola. A French fleet sails for Ireland, but is dispersed by storm.

1797 Kehl surrenders to the archduke. Bonaparte wins at Rivoli. Mantua and Ancona surrender. The pope makes Peace of Tolentino. The Archduke Charles arrives in Italy. Bonaparte defeats him on the Tagliamento, and reaches Leoben, when the Austrian court signs an armistice by which France is to receive Belgium. Meanwhile Hoche crosses the Rhine and defeats the Austrians at Neuwied and Altenkirchen. Moreau drives the Austrians into the Black Forest. The Preliminaries of Leoben put an end to both these generals' plans. An insurrection at Venice; Bonaparte overthrows the republic and establishes a provisory government. For similar outrages, the Genoese senate is overthrown and the Ligurian Republic established. England offers mediation and conferences are opened at Lille. The May elections in France show a reaction in favour of the royalists. The Directory, threatened, recalls General Hoche, and Bonaparte sends them General Augereau. The Directory carries out the *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor and establishes the ascendancy of the moderate party. Sudden death of Hoche. Treaty of Campo-Formio. Austria receives Venice, and France the Ionian Islands and the right bank of the Rhine. The Cisalpine Republic accepted. Insurrection at Rome. Joseph Bonaparte restores order.

1798 France intervenes in the troubles in Switzerland. General Berthier occupies Rome, expels the pope, and sets up the Roman Republic. Surrender of Bern. The Helvetic Republic replaces the ancient Swiss Confederacy. Bonaparte sails for Egypt, takes Malta, then Alexandria, defeats Murad Bey in the battle of the Pyramids and enters Cairo. Nelson destroys the French fleet in the battle of the Nile. The Porte declares war on France. Formation of the Second Coalition, into which Russia enters. Spain remains the sole ally of France. Neapolitan army drives the French from Rome. Defeat of Civitâ Castellana. French enter Piedmont, driving the king to Sardinia; recover Rome, and invade Naples. War threatened with United States of America over French claims to seize British subjects on neutral ships.

1799 Surrender of Naples and re-establishment of the Parthenopean Republic. Bonaparte, in Syria, takes Gaza and Jaffa. Turks and Russians capture the Ionian Islands. The Directory declares war on Austria and Tuscany. The archduke Charles drives Jourdan back to the Rhine. Schérer defeated by the Austrians at Verona and Magnano. The Rastatt congress dissolves. Murder of the French envoys. Suvaroff defeats Moreau at Cassano. The allies enter Milan. Bonaparte driven off from siege of Acre by Sir Sidney Smith and returns to Egypt. Macdonald abandons Naples and is defeated by Suvaroff on the Trebbia. Joubert defeated and slain by Suvaroff at Novi. Conflict of Directory and councils, 30th Prairial (June 18th). Critical position of the Directory and growing sentiment for Bonaparte. Lucien Bonaparte heads the opposition. Talleyrand retires from the office of foreign affairs. Terrible massacre of the French party in Naples by Cardinal Ruffo. Bonaparte defeats a Turkish Army at Abukir. Bonaparte returns to France. Masséna defeats Korsakoff, at Zurich. The duke of York, after several defeats by General Brune in Holland, is forced to surrender at Alkmaar. French garrison at Rome surrenders. Bonaparte prepares to assume the dictatorship. *Coup d'état* of the 18th and 19th Brumaire (November 9th and 10th). The Directory suppressed and replaced by the three consuls — Bonaparte, Sieyès, and Roger Ducos. A commission is appointed to revise the constitution.

The Consulate (1799–1804)

The Austrians capture Ancona and Coni. New constitution (year VIII) adopted December 13th. It provides for three consuls, elected for ten years: Bonaparte, first consul; Cambacérès, second; and Lebrun, third. First consul has all the power. Council of state, tribunate, and senate established.

1800 Treaty of Luçon with the Vendeans. Battle of Heliopolis in Egypt; Kléber, after making treaty to evacuate Egypt, defeats the Turks and re-establishes French dominion. Austrians defeat Masséna at Voltri. Brilliant campaign of Moreau in Bavaria: victories of Engen, Messkirch, and Biberach. Capture of Nice by Melas. Bonaparte crosses the Alps and restores the Cisalpine Republic. Masséna, forced to surrender Genoa, joins Bonaparte. Melas is checked at Montebello and totally defeated at Marengo. Armistice of Alessandria. Assassination of Kléber in Egypt. Menou takes command. Moreau enters Munich; the armistice stops his operations. The French surrender Malta to the British. Bonaparte renews treaty with the United States and ends the differences, which have resulted only in a few sea fights. Austria, instigated by Great Britain, renews the war. Moreau wins the brilliant victory of Hohenlinden, takes Salzburg, and wins on the Traun. In Italy, Brune forces the Austrians across the Adige. The French seize Tuscany, and Murat drives the Neapolitans from the papal states. Armistice of Steyr with Austria. Attempt to kill Bonaparte.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1801 Peace of Lunéville with Austria. Formation of the kingdom of Etruria. Naples makes peace with France. The English defeat Menou at Aboukir. Concordat with the pope. Cairo surrenders to the English. The French sign a treaty and evacuate Egypt. Peace made with Portugal, Russia, and Turkey.

1802 Bonaparte makes preparations for a descent on England. His plans are stopped by the Peace of Amiens. England recognises France's continental acquisitions and the republics, and restores the French colonies. Bonaparte president of the Italian Republic. Bonaparte made consul for life. The concordat adopted. The Legion of Honour established. Constitution of the year X, strengthening Bonaparte's position, adopted. Piedmont annexed to France. Bonaparte sends an army to Switzerland; also one to Haiti. Capture of Toussaint Louverture.

1803 England fails to carry out provision of the Peace of Amiens for turning Malta over to the knights of St. John. Bonaparte demands this restitution, and England replies by seizing French and Batavian ships. Rupture of peace with England. England declares war. Interdiction of English merchandise. Bonaparte plans to invade England. A British fleet captures St. Lucia, Tobago, St. Pierre, and Miquelon. Hanover surrenders to General Mortier. Louisiana sold to the United States. The blacks drive the French from Haiti, and General Rochambeau is captured by the British.

1804 Admiral Linois attacks the British East India fleet but is defeated. Conspiracy of Pichegru, Cadoudal, and Moreau against Bonaparte's life discovered. The duke d'Enghien abducted from Baden and shot. Adoption of the *Code Napoléon*. Bonaparte has himself proclaimed emperor as **Napoleon I**, May 18th.

THE FIRST EMPIRE (1804–1814)

The people ratify the establishment of the new dynasty by overwhelming majority. Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine by the pope.

1805 Third coalition against France formed by England, Russia, and Sweden. Failure of French and Spanish fleet to take Dominica. The Italian Republic made into a kingdom and Napoleon crowned king at Milan. The Ligurian Republic annexed to France. Napoleon, at Boulogne, plans to invade England. The coalition joined by Austria. Napoleon enters Germany and defeats General Mack at Wertingen, Günzburg, and Elchingen. Augsburg and Munich taken by the French. Ulm surrenders to Ney. Nelson wins at Trafalgar. Napoleon enters Vienna; wins at Austerlitz. Armistice concluded. Treaty of Pressburg.

1806 The Gregorian calendar restored in France. Napoleon puts Joseph Bonaparte on the throne of Naples and makes Louis Bonaparte king of Holland. He forms the imperial princes into the Confederation of the Rhine and makes himself its protector, which puts an end to the empire of Charlemagne. Fourth Coalition between Russia, Prussia, England and Sweden. Napoleon defeats Prussia at Schleiz, Auerstädt, and Jena; he

enters Berlin. Conquest of Prussia completed. Napoleon issues decree for the continental blockade. He defeats the Russian army at Czarnovo, Golymin, Soldau, and Pultusk.

1807 The tribunate suspended. Surrender of Breslau to the French. Bernadotte defeats the Russians at Mohrungen, and Napoleon wins an indecisive victory at Eylau. Napoleon defeats the Russians at Friedland and occupies Königsberg. Treaty of Tilsit with the emperor Alexander. Hesse-Cassel and adjacent provinces made into kingdom of Westphalia for Jerome Bonaparte; the Polish provinces of Prussia are made into the duchy of Warsaw and given to the king of Saxony. Both form part of the Confederation of the Rhine. Alexander enters Napoleon's continental system. The Peninsular War begins. The Portuguese court flees, and General Junot occupies Lisbon.

1808 Murat invades Spain and occupies Madrid. The royal family of Spain meet Napoleon at Bayonne and resign their rights. Napoleon makes Joseph Bonaparte king of Spain, and puts Murat on the throne of Naples. The inhabitants of Madrid revolt, and are subdued with great slaughter. The whole of Spain rises. England agrees to assist. Lord Collingwood captures the French fleet off Cadiz. General Bessières wins at Medina del Rio Seco. Joseph enters Madrid. The French are defeated at Saragossa and Valencia, and General Dupont surrenders to the Spaniards at Baylen. Joseph leaves Madrid. Sir Arthur Wellesley arrives in Spain with an army and defeats Junot at Vimeiro. Portugal lost to the French by the capitulation of Cintra. Interview of Napoleon and Alexander at Erfurt, where the terms of Tilsit are renewed. Napoleon arrives in Spain, wins victories at Burgos, Espinosa, and Tudela, and enters Madrid.

1809 General Soult drives the British from Salamanca and defeats them at Corunna. Successes of General Gouvion-Saint-Cyr in Catalonia. The English seize Martinique. Joseph Bonaparte returns to Madrid, Napoleon to Paris. Capture of Ferrol by Soult. Surrender of Saragossa to the French. Failure of Soult's expedition to Portugal, although he gains Oporto. The French fleet destroyed in the Basque Roads. Austria renews the war and forms the Fifth Coalition with England and Germany. Napoleon defeats the Austrians at Abendsberg, Landshut, Eckmühl, Ratisbon, Vienna, Aspern, and Essling. The pope excommunicates Napoleon, who carries him off a prisoner to Savona. Great victory of Wagram, which ruins for a time the military power of Austria. Armistice concluded at Znaim. Joseph and Soult defeat the Anglo-Spaniards at Talavera. The English seize Flushing, threaten Antwerp, and capture the Ionian Islands. Peace of Vienna. Cordova and Seville surrender. Napoleon divorces Josephine.

1810 The English capture Guadeloupe, the Isle of Bourbon (Réunion), and Mauritius. The papal states are added to France. Napoleon marries the archduchess Marie Louise of Austria. General Victor besieges Cadiz; Suchet captures Lerida. Dutch Brabant and Zealand are annexed to France. The king of Holland abdicates, and the country is added to the French Empire. Masséna captures Almeida, but is defeated by Wellington at Busaco, and the latter holds the lines of Torres Vedras. Ney captures Ciudad Rodrigo. Masséna retreats from Santarem. The Hanseatic towns are united to France. Napoleon seizes the duchy of Oldenburg.

1811 Capture of Tortosa by Suchet, and Olivenza and Badajoz by Soult. The French defeated at Barrosa. Oldenburg united to France, causing rupture with Russia. Birth of a son to Napoleon. Wellington defeats Masséna at Fuentes de Onoro and captures Almeida. Defeat of Soult at Albuera.

1812 Capture of Valencia by Suchet. Wellington recaptures Badajoz. War declared on Russia. Formation of the Sixth Coalition between England, Russia, and Sweden. Wellington wins at Salamanca, and enters Madrid. Napoleon begins his march to Russia. He wins battles of Smolensk and Borodino. Arrives at Moscow. The city burned. Retreat from Moscow begins. Battle of Malojaroslavetz. The Beresina is crossed with immense loss. Napoleon reaches Vilna with the wreck of his army. He gives command to Murat and returns to Paris. Failure of Malet's conspiracy. The French reoccupy Madrid.

1813 The French army reaches Berlin. Napoleon defeats the Russians and Prussians at Lützen, Bautzen, and Hochkirchen. Wellington defeats Joseph at Vitoria. The French retreat to the Pyrenees. Wellington enters France. Surrender of Pamplona. Negotiations at Dresden. Austria declares war on France. Macdonald defeated on the Katzbach and Oudinot at Grossbeeren. Napoleon defeats the allies at Dresden, but loses at Leipsic, "one of the decisive battles of the world's history." French domination of Europe is ruined and all the imperial creations come to an end. Napoleon makes treaty with Spain and liberates Ferdinand VII. The Austrian army enters France.

1814 Blücher enters France. Napoleon restores the pope to Rome. Wellington defeats Soult at Orthez. The British repulsed at Bergen-op-Zoom. Combats follow almost daily. The English enter Bordeaux, where Louis XVIII is proclaimed king. The allies march on Paris and compel surrender. Napoleon deposed by the senate. He abdicates at Fontainebleau on behalf of his son Napoleon II; then abdicates completely and retires to Elba.

THE FIRST BOURBON RESTORATION (1814–1815)

1814 **Louis XVIII** elected king; in ignorance of this, Wellington defeats Soult at Toulouse (April 10th). Peninsular War ends. Louis promulgates a constitution (*charte*) embodying principles of 1789. First Peace of Paris (May 30th): boundaries settled as in 1792. Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia (the Pentarchy), with Spain, Portugal, and Sweden, sign Act of the Congress of Vienna, leaving Belgium to France, recognising the Netherlands, and creating the German Confederation.

The Hundred Days (1815)

1815 Dissensions at Vienna and French discontent with the Bourbons encourage Napoleon to return from Elba. Forced march to Paris; Ney and the army join him. International proclamation against Napoleon. Louis XVIII flees. All Europe, except Sweden, allied against Napoleon. Murat defeated at Tolentino (May 3rd). Ferdinand restored as king of Naples. Blücher defeated at Ligny, and Ney defeated at Quatre-Bras (June 16th). Wellington, with British, Dutch, and German troops, and the help of Blücher, defeats Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo (June 18th). Napoleon goes to Paris, abdicates (June 22nd), and flees to Rochefort. Commission of government (Fouché, president); **Napoleon II** proclaimed (June 23rd).

[*For the subsequent chronology of French history see Vol. XIII, page* 260.]

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R.R.
JAEGER

NAPOLEON'S EMPIRE AT THE TIME OF ITS GREATEST EXTENT. ABOUT 1811.

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