

Day from
Mother.
June 24. 1901.

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MEMOIRS
OF
THE COURT OF THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE
VOL. III.

Court Memoir Series

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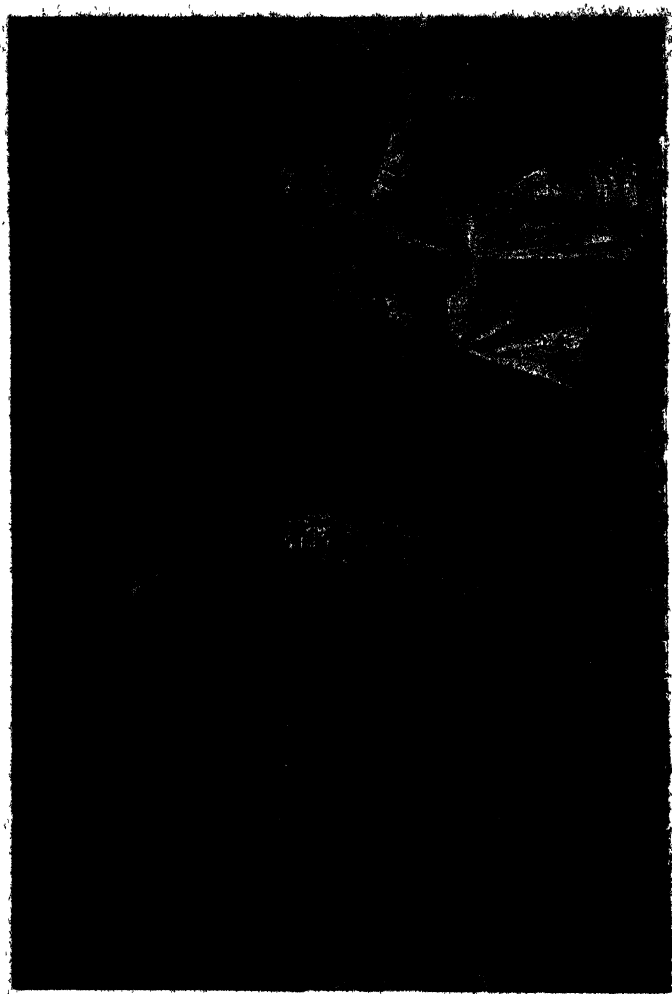
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Josephine

SECRET COURT MEMOIRS.

COURT OF THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE.

INTRODUCTION.

Correction of Some Errors in the Details Previously Given
Concerning the Empress Josephine's Death.—Purport of
a Note Communicated to Me — MM. Horeau, Bourdois,
Laserre and Béclard.—Unbecoming Conduct of M. de
M—— at Malmaison.

ANXIOUS to redeem the engagement I have entered
into towards the public of recording with scrupulous
accuracy whatever relates to the Empress Josephine,
I feel the utmost readiness to transcribe a note which
has just been directed to me by a person of Her Maj-
esty's household, who was not a single moment absent
from her during the closing scene of her existence.
Many of the details now furnished to me are at vari-
ance with those I had previously collected, but my
present source of information is so unquestionable
as to leave no room for doubting the truth of certain

facts which I am about to place in their proper light, availing myself of the precise terms in which they are communicated to me :

“ Her Majesty’s health had been for a long time past on the decline, a circumstance evidently owing to an anxiety of mind engendered by the rapid succession of passing events.

“ On her return from Saint Leu, she was recommended a slight dose of ipecacuanha as a corrective to her disorder, but no purgative was deemed necessary.

“ On the 25th of June, M. Horeau, who had at all times an apartment at Malmaison, was only absent for a couple of hours during the dinner given by Her Majesty to the Princess Royal of Prussia, and the object of his absence was to come to an understanding with MM. Bourdois and Laserre, the physicians of Queen Hortense, respecting a consultation to which the Viceroy had given his sanction for the following day. M. Horeau having returned to Malmaison previous to the time when the increase of Her Majesty’s complaint placed her under the necessity of quitting the salon, the services of the physician of Rueil were of course dispensed with, and M. Horeau had no occasion, therefore, to reproach him with any hesitation in prescribing for the patient.

“ The appointed consultation took place on the 26th between MM. Horeau, Bourdois, and Laserre ; they determined the mode of treatment to be adopted,

and agreed to meet at ten o'clock in the morning on each succeeding day. M. Laserre even shared with M. Horeau, during the last forty-eight hours, the watchful attentions which the state of the patient rendered necessary.

“The Empress was not exposed to public view on a bed of parade in the apartment leading to the bed-chamber; and it is impossible that any one could have seen her veiled. This circumstance was no doubt invented with a view to give a degree of plausibility to certain absurd reports which were circulated at that period. Her Majesty was embalmed by M. Béclaud two days after her demise, and in M. Horeau's presence. The corpse was then laid in a leaden coffin enclosed in a mahogany case, on the lid of which was a silver-gilt plate for the intended inscription, the wording of which was for a long time a matter of embarrassment to courtiers. It was not difficult, however, to anticipate what would be the result of their labours; these gentlemen unanimously determined that existing circumstances, considerations of prudence, and so forth, made it imperative to abstain from placing any inscription; not the slightest record was engraved upon the plate!

“The cenotaph under which the body was exposed to view until the hour of interment was placed in the great hall of the palace.

“The Empress was not interred in the burial-

ground of Rueil, but within the church of that village, and in the very spot over which the monument has recently been erected. The greatest difficulty was experienced in obtaining permission from the public authorities for the interment to take place within the church; leave was at last granted after considerable discussion on the subject."

After such positive information, for the accuracy of which I can now vouch with as much confidence as if I had been an eye-witness of the facts, I have deemed it my duty to correct, as I now do, the statement of the events which occurred on the 25th and 26th. Aware of M. Horeau's deep and unbounded attachment to the Empress, who had for the preceding ten years honoured him with her unlimited confidence, I never could suspect him guilty of the slightest neglect, than which nothing could be more foreign to his exalted character and generous heart. I have to regret my not being made sooner acquainted with the exact truth.

Being at a distance from Malmaison at the fatal period of Her Majesty's death, I trusted to the report made to me by a friend, who, giving way to the poignancy of grief, was thereby prevented from calmly beholding what passed before her, and readily believed every circumstance calculated to heighten her regret. My friend will not have been sufficiently on her guard against the no less atrocious than absurd reports cir-

culated at the time ; and she accordingly related what she supposed to be true rather than what had come under her personal observation. Be this as it may, it is never too late to acknowledge an error ; Madame ——— will no doubt retract it when she peruses the above statement.

Shortly before the Empress fell ill she expressed her intention of retiring to an estate which she had purchased in Switzerland. She asked M. Horeau if he were disposed to accompany her there ; and the latter unhesitatingly consented to quit his native country rather than abandon a sovereign already deserted by many of her most *faithful attendants*, who hurried away to the Tuileries in order to pay their court to His Majesty, Louis XVIII., whose well-known benevolence and sound judgment had prompted him to *forget* all the past. At a later period he had to *forgive* everything, and he did so with a sincerity which the annals of future ages cannot fail to record to his praise.

M. de M—— arrived at Malmaison on the very day of the King's entrance into Paris. Holding as he did an important station in Her Majesty's household, he very properly wore the dress appropriate to that station. The Empress no sooner saw him than she came up to ask what was going forward. On beholding a broad white ribbon suspended to his buttonhole, near the cross of the Legion of Honour,—

“What new order are you wearing, monsieur?” she inquired, fixing her eyes upon him.

“It is not an order, madame,” he replied; “it is a rallying sign, which is worn by many people in Paris; I deemed it prudent to assume it as others have done.”

“You must admit, monsieur,” rejoined Her Majesty, “that it does not become your present uniform.”

So saying, she abruptly walked away, and avoided speaking to him the whole day.

The truth of this anecdote may be fully relied on, and can be vouched by all those who were at the Palace of Malmaison on the occasion.

This bold display in Her Majesty’s presence of sentiments so recently adopted evinced a wanton reliance upon her good nature. Men who can thus, chameleon like, change their colours at will, excite no other feeling than that of contempt; but, out of consideration for their families, we are bound to suppress the names of those who so disgraced themselves! A respect for misfortune must ever rank foremost amongst the duties of a generous heart; and the brand of shame must ever be affixed to those who presume to insult fallen greatness. We may abstain from serving those for whom we feel no affection; but it behooves us, likewise, not to desert an honourable and exalted station at the very moment when the exercise of it may be attended with danger.

The Bourbons have surrounded themselves with men who had been in the service of Napoleon; our truly excellent Princes have applauded those feelings which drew tears of regret at the period of the demise of a former benefactor; they would as unequivocally have censured such an act as I have just related. A short time afterwards, M. de M——, who was guilty of it, was put in possession of a prefecture! . . . Happily for him, the ingratitude with which he repaid the generosity of a woman who had won the affection of the very detractors of her husband had probably not been made public.

The letters we are about to lay before our readers will, no doubt, excite much interest, by the novel details given by Josephine with respect to certain facts relating to her first husband, Vicomte Alexandre de Beauharnais, whose elevated character commanded the respect of his enemies in as great a degree as his gentle qualities won him the affection of his numerous friends. As this correspondence, which was anterior to the period when I became acquainted with the Empress, formed no part of the plan of the work I had undertaken to write, I deemed it proper that they should be kept wholly distinct from each other. It has occurred to me at the same time that it would not be irrelevant to my purpose were I to add to the letters any hitherto unknown facts which I might be possessed of respecting the

personages therein adverted to, as well as occasional reflections suggested by the events which the Empress has recorded in such attractive language, and with so much warmth and tenderness of feeling. I have dipped at every source of information which was calculated to give the stamp of authenticity to what I should lay before the public; and I have suppressed those passages in the correspondence which might possibly affect the character of several actors in that frightful drama who have not yet paid the debt of nature.

If a joke should occasionally escape me, I may at least claim the merit of having neither calumniated virtuous men nor added to the remorse of the guilty by removing the veil which concealed any crimes still hid from public view; the chidings of an uneasy conscience is an incessant punishment to them. Consigning them, therefore, to the torments of perpetual self-reproach, I abstain from aggravating those torments. Upon many persons who have injured me I have bestowed praises because they were really entitled to them. A wrong which was personal to myself could not in other respects detract from their good qualities; to these I was accordingly bound to give every publicity. No other revenge have I resorted to beyond that of bestowing praises upon individuals who had given me personal grounds of complaint. Very seldom have I requited the most unmerited ill

usage by exposing to public view an acknowledged failing. This is, no doubt, carrying the principle of moderation to an extreme at a time when publications are daily springing up which are found to teem with calumnious assertions wholly destitute of truth, though brought forward with unblushing assurance. They meet with ready contradiction, it is true, but the first impression remains; and when their refutation makes its appearance the blow is already struck and is past all remedy. Nothing is more dangerous than a hasty accusation bearing upon matters of serious importance, since an unguarded expression may disturb the repose of the most lengthened existence. I feel happy in the consciousness that I am free from such a reproach. The "Memoirs" which emanate from a female pen are, moreover, so unimportant that they are read as likely to afford, not any historical documents, but enlivening anecdotes, some characteristic portraits, many *real names*, and a faithful picture of society. If we have the good fortune to succeed, to a certain extent, in the narrow sphere of action in which our pen is allowed to range, we may rest satisfied, and cheerfully resign to men the more lasting and more elevated glory which is thrown open for their ambition. Who shall contest that they already pay too high a price for the acquisition of that glory by the necessity which it imposes upon them of describing sanguinary events, of revealing crimes

of the most atrocious character, and frequently of rending the veil which shelters from public view the horrid picture of accumulated vices ?

Women, destined by nature to administer consolation and assuage misfortunes, should wield the pen for no other purpose than to portray the softer feelings, to hold up modest virtues to admiration, to raise noble deeds out of unmerited obscurity ; such is their gentle mission, when they appear in the character of authors ; if they aim at more comprehensive objects they outstep the limits which Nature has assigned to them.

There existed in the public mind an eager curiosity to become better acquainted with the Empress Josephine, to be introduced into the domesticity of her private life, and to be afforded the means of determining whether she was entitled to the admiration which has survived her ; feeling satisfied that I could not fail to enhance that admiration by relating every circumstance to which I could bear the authenticity of an eye-witness, I have accomplished the task with uncompromising frankness and truth ; happy shall I be if success has crowned my efforts !

The following letters, for which I am indebted to a most signal act of kindness, will exhibit in a still more conspicuous light Josephine's elevation of soul and her excellent qualities ; I cannot sufficiently express how highly I prize those letters ; the praises

I have lavished will be fully borne out by their perusal. The originals have never been in my possession, but the copies are too creditable to the heart and mind of the Empress to allow of my doubting for a moment their authenticity. This preliminary explanation appears not wholly uncalled for, as it will screen me from the weight of a responsibility from which I deemed myself exonerated, having especially at heart never to be branded with the charge of insincerity.

LETTER I.

TO HER AUNT, MADAME FANNY DE BEAUHARNAIS.

She Relates the Arrestation of M. de Beauharnais. — Fanaticism of a Young Shoemaker. — M. de Beauharnais's Reflections on the Subject of the Revolution.

“ALAS, my dearest aunt, I claim your pity, your consolation, your advice! Alexandre has been arrested; at the very moment I am writing to you they are leading him to the Luxembourg!

“As early as the day before yesterday an ill-looking man was seen lurking about the house. Yesterday, about three o'clock in the afternoon, a person came to inquire of the porter whether citizen Beauharnais had returned from Saint-Germain. Now, my husband has not resided at Saint-Germain since the month of May. You were with us, aunt, and you will probably recollect that Cubières read us some verses concerning the Pavillon de Luciennes. The same person again made his appearance in the evening, accompanied by a tall old man, who put a few questions in a dry and harsh tone of voice.

“‘Is this the house of Beauharnais, the Viscount?’

“ ‘Viscount formerly,’ replied the porter.

“ ‘Who was once President of the Assembly?’

“ ‘I believe so.’

“ ‘And is a general officer?’

“ ‘Yes, monsieur.’

“ ‘Monsieur!’ harshly retorted the querist; ‘the old adage is true,’ said he, turning towards his silent companion, ‘what is bred in the bone will never come out of the flesh.’

“ He no sooner spoke these words than they withdrew, and in a moment were out of sight.

“ At eight o’clock this morning a person called and expressed a wish to speak with me; he was a young man of a mild and honest countenance, and wore a leathern apron containing a few pairs of shoes.

“ ‘The citizen has ordered a pair of grey prunella shoes?’ said the man.

“ Victorine was present when he put this question, which was quite inexplicable to me. I looked at my *femme de chambre*, who was as ignorant as myself of the matter. The young man’s countenance indicated his uneasiness; he kept twisting a shoe with his fingers, and fixing a mournful look at me. Coming up to me at last, he said in an undertone:

“ ‘Madame, I have something to communicate for your private hearing.’

“ The sound of his voice, his looks, a suppressed sigh, caused me some emotion.

“‘Speak out,’ I quickly replied; ‘Victorine may safely remain.’

“‘Alas,’ he exclaimed, with apparent reluctance, ‘my life is at stake!’

“I instantly rose, and dismissed Victorine, after desiring her to tell my husband what was going forward.

“‘Madame,’ said the young journeyman, when we were left alone, ‘you have not a moment to lose in procuring the escape of M. de Beauharnais. The Revolutionary Committee came last night to the determination of arresting him, and an order to that effect is being drawn up this very moment.’

“I turned pale, and was on the point of fainting when I heard this intelligence.

“‘How do you know this?’ I asked, in trembling accents.

“‘I belong to the Committee,’ he replied, with downcast eyes; ‘and, as I am by trade a shoemaker, it occurred to me that these shoes would afford me a favourable pretence for coming to apprise madame of the news.’

“I could have embraced this honest young man out of pure gratitude. He perceived I was crying and I think I saw tears in his eyes. Alexandre came in at this moment, and I rushed into his arms.

“‘You see this is my husband,’ said I to the shoemaker.

“‘I have the honour of knowing him,’ was his reply.

“Your nephew, on hearing the service intended to be rendered to him, was desirous of repaying it by an immediate reward ; but the shoemaker resisted with a firmness which greatly enhanced our esteem for him. Alexandre held out his hand, which the young man took in a respectful manner, but without the slightest embarrassment. Pray, dear aunt, never employ any one else to make your shoes.

“In spite of our entreaties, Alexandre refused to seek his safety in flight.

“‘What have they to reproach me with?’ he exclaimed. ‘I am a friend to liberty, have promoted the success of the Revolution, and if it had depended upon me it would before this have terminated in a manner that would have ended to the advantage of the people.’

“‘But you are a man of title,’ replied the shoemaker. ‘This, in the eyes of the Revolutionists, is a grievous fault.’

“‘It is a misfortune beyond the power of remedy.’

“‘They may convert it into a crime,’ I added, ‘and will then reproach you for having belonged to the Constituent Assembly.’

“‘My worthy friend,’ resumed Alexandre, with a dignified manner and in a firm tone of voice, ‘the latter circumstance is my proudest claim to glory ; it

is even the only one I have any pretension to assert. Who would not be proud of having proclaimed the nation's rights, the downfall of despotism, and the empire of the laws ?'

" 'What laws ?' I exclaimed. 'They are written in characters of blood.'

" 'Madame,' said the young man, laying an emphasis upon his words which he had not hitherto done, 'when the Tree of Liberty is planted in a bad soil, it must be watered with the blood of its enemies.'

" M. de Beauharnais and I looked at each other, nor could we fail to discover in this young man, whom nature had gifted with tender feelings, the Revolutionist who might be converted into a monster by the growth of rising prejudices and popular opinions.

" Meanwhile the time was fast flying ; he took leave of us, renewing to my husband the assurance that after the lapse of another hour it would be too late to evade the search that would be made after him.

" 'I have used my endeavours to save you,' said the shoemaker, 'because I believe you to be an innocent man ; humanity claimed this duty at my hands ; but if I were ordered to arrest you . . . pardon me when I tell you that I should obey ; and that you would find in me a true patriot. I shall always consider you in the light of an upright man, possessed of a kind and generous heart ; I am quite confident you

will never appear to me in any other character than that of a true citizen.'

"‘This,’ said Alexandre to me when the shoemaker had retired, ‘this is a specimen of the new-fangled ideas which are instilled in the minds of our youths. Liberty is only to be upheld by shedding the blood of men of title, even of those who are most devoted to the rising opinions. If they were merely turbulent and cruel in their proceedings, this thirst after blood, this despotic fanaticism, would die away; but they act upon a regular system, and Robespierre has imparted a doctrinal principle to the Revolutionary agitation, the progress of which will only be checked by the total extirpation of its real or fancied enemies, or when its author shall have been swept from the stage of life. Obstinate, however, in his pursuit, he imagines that liberty can only acquire strength when its votaries shall have been satiated with blood.’

"‘I tremble at such language,’ said I to Alexandre; ‘how can you speak in this manner, and yet hesitate to fly?’

"‘Whither am I to fly?’ he replied. ‘Is there a cellar, a garret, a single spot that can escape the tyrant’s search? Do you forget that he sees through the eyes of forty thousand committees animated with his spirit and strong in the consciousness of his power? The torrent has overflown its banks; the people by rushing in contribute to swell its waters.

We must yield to the force of circumstances ; if condemned, I have no means of escaping my doom ; if acquitted, whether I be free or kept in confinement, I have nothing to apprehend.'

"Fruitless were my tears and entreaties ; within a quarter of an hour of mid-day three members of the Revolutionary Committee made their appearance, and an armed force took possession of our hôtel.

"You will no doubt suppose that my young shoemaker was in the midst of them ; such was actually the case ; and although I could not but lament to see him in the exercise of such functions, nevertheless I must acknowledge that I felt some degree of satisfaction at finding that on this occasion they had devolved to his lot. He took upon himself the task of signifying to Alexandre the order which directed his arrest and performed it with no less consideration than firmness. In the midst of a crisis so painful to my feelings, I could not help noticing the air of authority, and at the same time the becoming tone, assumed by this young man whose condition in life appears to have estranged him from every public employment, but who levels the distinction by great elevation of soul combined with a strict attention to the rules of propriety. The deportment of his two comrades, who were absolute strangers to its most ordinary notions, exhibited a most revolting contrast to his own conduct. One of them turns out to be

that superannuated inquisitor who made yesterday such particular inquiries respecting the person and avocations of my husband ; he is an old Martinico planter who, in spite of the rules of equality, has distinguished the human species into two classes : into masters and slaves. He is of opinion that the Revolution will never be completed until its enemies shall have been reduced to the condition of the negroes who are exported from Senegal to America ; and in furtherance of this object he requires that the trade in priests, nobles, wealthy and learned men, all aristocratic people, in short, should fill up the void occasioned in St. Domingo by the extinction of the slave trade which the Revolution has suppressed. ‘ Two important results,’ he added, ‘ will be effected by this measure : the repose of the mother-country, and the attainment of the object contemplated by the Revolution ; in other words, the spread of equality will be the first result ; the second is secured by the renewal of the population of the colonies and the restoration of commerce. You are, moreover, paying a signal homage to unoffending nature by maintaining the abolition of the slave trade on the coasts of Africa, and inflicting a just punishment upon proud and corrupted nature by transferring that trade to the coasts of France. Thus it is that genuine Republicans secure the triumph of morality by measures of an exalted and comprehensive policy.’

“The sinister glance of the ferocious old man, whose sunken eyes were directed towards me when he uttered this expression, evidently shewed that he intended to impress them on my mind. His third colleague, a man of brutal and coarse deportment, was boisterously making an inventory of the principal articles of furniture and of the papers. He selected from the latter whatever documents he thought proper, and sealed them up in a pasteboard case, which he sent to the Committee. They consisted for the most part of reports and speeches made by Alexandre in the Constituent Assembly. This assembly is held by the Revolutionists in utter abhorrence, and is equally detested by aristocrats of every rank and shade. May not this be a proof that it had solved every problem of the Revolution, and that in matters connected with liberty it had formed every establishment requisite to promote its growth? It had deprived the administration of 1789 of all its means of action, and that of 1793 of all its hopes. Alexandre has frequently repeated to me that the creation of the one and the revival of the other could only be effected by violence and by deeds of atrocity. Why are his predictions to be so correctly verified? Why should he wish to add to the gift of prophecy the merit of dying a martyr?”

LETTER II.

TO VICTORINE, HER FEMME DE CHAMBRE.

Desk with Secret Drawers. — Dame Margaret. — Benevolent Disposition of Madame de Beauharnais.

“I SHOULD be wanting in kindness to my worthy Victorine were I to recommend zeal, activity, and secrecy in her proceedings. When the seals were affixed to the furniture in my husband’s apartment, this precaution could not be extended to one of the sides of his large desk because the opening of the drawer on that side went into the grain of the mahogany; in a line perpendicular to one of the veins which assumes the form of a lozenge, of a brown and unpolished gold colour, at the distance of half an inch from the lower projection, is an opening lined with a square flat plate of iron, nearly resembling the leg of a piano. There is, in fact, in the centre of that opening, a small iron rod which is moved and made to turn by means of the keys appertaining to that piece of furniture. Victorine will take the key of my own desk, open the secret drawer, and deposit in a secure and concealed spot a bundle of papers which is tied with a piece of blue ribbon. She will also find in the

drawer a snuff-box with my portrait on the lid, which she may forward in the next parcel she sends to the Luxembourg. My worthy Victorine will not forget to send also in the parcel the new works which Desenne has left at my hôtel; I particularly wish her not to forget a work entitled '*Le Vieux Cordelier*.'

"I take it for granted that my absence has in no manner interfered with the regularity of my distributions. I wish them to be continued as usual. Victorine will give two portions to Dame Margaret, as I am informed that she has lately had an accession of family in a grandson, a circumstance which her delicacy would not allow her to tell me."

This letter proves how much Josephine's mind was bent upon relieving the distressed at the very moment when she was most harassed by the apprehension of the dangers which threatened her. Dame Margaret, whom I have just mentioned, was one of the poor people who were relieved at their own houses through Madame de Beauharnais's bounty.

Persuaded as she was that the most effectual way of bestowing alms was to give them in kind, she economised on her scanty income so as to have it in her power to dispose of a certain fund towards relieving the wants of those distressed individuals who, being too proud to acknowledge their unmerited misfortunes, would have perished in a garret from abso-

lute want had not charity sought out their abode and extended a protecting hand to them. By a seasonable distribution of bread, broth, and wine, they recovered their strength, which had become exhausted from sheer want; and Madame de Beauharnais afterwards exerted herself to procure them occupations by which they might be relieved from the pain of being a burden to her. Her friends anxiously sought to second her views, satisfied that they could not prove their attachment in a more effectual manner, and whole families were accordingly indebted to her for their enjoyment of a peaceful existence.

A few years afterwards she herself became a prey to that distress which she had ever made it her study to relieve in others, and Providence threw some persons in her way whose hearts proved congenial to her own. This was the just reward of her charitable deed.

LETTER III.

TO MADAME FANNY DE BEAUHARNAIS.

The French Character Remains Unchanged within the Precincts of a Prison.—Madame De Montesson.—Her Gaolers.—Mdlles. Contat, Devienne, and Raucourt.—Mdlle. Raucourt at Navarre.—The Empress Makes Her a Present of a Camellia.

“MY DEAREST AUNT: Why do the kind attentions of your friends and your impaired state of health detain you in the country? I stand greatly in need of you at this moment. My house is now a wilderness, and I find myself more forlorn and deserted still. For the last five days that have elapsed since he * was removed from it, his friends have all by degrees disappeared. It is now six o'clock, and no one has yet called. I am wrong when I say no one. My excellent young man is not disheartened; he calls twice or three times a day with news from the Luxembourg; as long as his duty does not keep him away he is indifferent to the danger of exposing his person; the contagion which attends on misfortunes has no

* M. Alexandre de Beauharnais, a prisoner at the Luxembourg.

effect upon him. He is entrusted by Alexandre with all the letters which are destined for my secret perusal; the gaolers and the Committee have the first reading of the rest. Subjoined I transmit you a copy of one, the original of which shall lie close to my heart during the remainder of my existence, and be consigned with me to the tomb:

“You are unreasonable, my dearest love, and I must needs write to console you. I feel indeed the less difficulty in so doing, as this is really the abode of peace for those whose conscience is free from reproach; it will then suggest to oneself and to others every sentiment which the heart may avow, every thought on which the mind may delight to rest, all the gentlest affections of human nature. I should bitterly grieve at our separation were it likely to be prolonged; but I was bred to a soldier's life, and whilst at a distance from my kind Josephine and our dearest children, I fancy myself carrying on a campaign; for the occurrence of an untoward event steels us against misfortunes. If you knew how successfully they may be combated in this dwelling, you would blush at your repining. I can declare with perfect truth that each *détenu* leaves his sorrow behind him, and displays nothing but serenity and good humour in this place. We have transferred our social intercourse to the Luxembourg, politics

alone excepted; you will therefore admit that we have culled the flowers, and thrown away the thorns. We find here women the most fascinating, and yet free from coquettishness and prudery; old men who neither frown at everything nor deal in precepts of morality, but are content with gently chiding the defects of others; young men who are little short of rational beings; polite, well-behaved men of science,* who are altogether free from pride, and cheer our society by lively traits of wit and entertaining anecdotes; but what will more particularly surprise you is that moneyed men should have suddenly acquired the most perfect amenity of disposition, the most refined good breeding, features so contrasting with their usual impertinence and coarseness of man-

* Several men of science were in fact taken up, apparently to punish their having evinced sentiments of gratitude in return for the protection extended to them by the higher nobility, it was at that time deemed a paramount duty, not only to encourage the arts, but to exhibit towards its immediate promoters the most refined politeness out of pure admiration for their talents, a discrimination was no doubt exercised in the selection of those whose manners and deportment bespoke the effects of a refined education, such men as Gluck, Piccini, Sacchini, Dussek, Pradher, Dupont, Garat, Vernet, Ménageot, were treated with every mark of kindness and consideration. If many artists of the present day have blunted or destroyed, by frequenting coffee-houses or dangerous societies, those talents which might have handed down their fame to posterity, the fault is perhaps to be ascribed to the indifference shewn for them by the higher^d classes of society. We might mention several, such as Cherubini, Auber, Fétis, Paër, Boyeldieu, Baillet, Kalkbrenner, Zimmermann, Rhein, Gérard, Gros, Cicéri, and others who are quite at home in genteel company, arts and sciences can only prosper and gain proselytes when they are properly encouraged and respected.

ners.* We have here, therefore, the choicest company, and nothing is wanting to it but my Josephine and our dear children; what, indeed, could compete with so delightful a trio! My exceptions, however, must extend to our worthy friend Nevil; his only fault is that he should consider himself a second Brutus. As to his belonging to the Committee, this circumstance has been too favourable to me to warrant my making it a matter of reproach. I confide to him, my dearest life, the charge of handing you this letter, which I seal with a thousand kisses until I am at liberty to bestow them freely and without number.' "

*The pride of wealth has at all times held paramount sway, and we might quote many proofs that this assertion holds good at the present day. It is very true that we no longer see the Mondors and Tucarets of old, but if we may boast of many of our fellow countrymen, wealthy bankers, who make the most splendid use of their fortune, and whose gentleness of manners enhances the value of their meritorious acts, we might also find specimens of that wanton pride in which those men are found to revel who have accumulated millions. The following anecdote will elucidate the correctness of my observation. It is confidently reported that M R——, one of our richest capitalists, being in conversation, some eight years ago, with the Prince of Denmark, expressed his surprise at His Royal Highness having selected that moment for visiting France. "For, monseigneur," said he, "Paris is dreadfully dull, my fall out of a tilbury, and the death of Monseigneur, the Duc de Berry, have thrown a gloom over the mirth of society, Your Royal Highness, therefore, cannot as yet form a correct opinion of it." I can hardly credit the truth of this anecdote, the self-sufficiency and folly of the individual in question must have been carried to the highest pitch when so absurd an expression could have been ascribed to him. No one in existence would have dreamed of its emanating from such men as MM Lafitte, Perrier, or Lapanouze, whose conduct will at all times suggest traits highly redounding to their honor.

All those who have been confined in a prison at that frightful period speak the same language as that uttered by M. de Beauharnais. There can be no doubt that their character remained unchanged notwithstanding the confinement in which they were held by their tyrannical rulers. Threatened at every moment with the prospect of issuing from those gloomy abodes to proceed to the scaffold, it seemed as if each prisoner felt anxious to dissipate his grief in the indulgence of laughter, and in the delirium of the most absolute indifference; oftentimes, in the midst of a well-told and cheerful narrative of a dialogue full of wit, the gaolers came to announce the sentence of one of those unhappy prisoners, whose only attachment to life appeared to consist in its social enjoyments.

I was at a loss to account for this Stoicism at the disappearance of acquaintances, friends, or relatives; on a sudden they found themselves surrounded by strange beings coming to replace those who a few days before had shared their captivity, and were likely to precede them to the scaffold, or shortly to tread in their footsteps. How, then, could distraction find its way in the minds of men who had either to deplore their separation from beings to whom they were linked by the dearest ties, or for whose fate they could not but feel the liveliest alarm! I can more readily account for the indifference of

men upon whom the fatal sentence of the law had actually been pronounced, and who proceeded to the scaffold with perfect resignation and serenity of mind, and decked out in their gayest attire. They were about to receive the crown of martyrdom for a cause to which they were fondly devoted; they might in their last hour proclaim their wishes for the prosperity of their King and country; they no longer felt any apprehension for the objects of their affection, and were about to join those who had been torn from them by an untimely death.

Madame de Montesson has often related in our presence many occurrences of that period which might appear exaggerated to us who were so far removed from the atrocities of the Reign of Terror. That lady was a perfect stranger to the spirit of cheerfulness which pervaded the society in which she moved; of a pious turn of mind, submissive and resigned to the decrees of Providence, she never gave way to discouragement, at the same time she kept aloof from pleasures which justly appeared in her sight as a perfect contrast with the abode of grief in which they were exhibited.

The attendants upon the prison were in amazement at her gentleness and patience; they often said to her, with a look expressive of compassion:

“Pity it is thou shouldst go to figure away with the rest; thou art a good woman, but depend upon

it, that detestable name of thine will be thy ruin; the title of Orléans leads straight to ——;” and they ended with an energetic gesticulation, descriptive of the close of the career they had been anticipating for her.

She remained eighteen months in this state of excruciating uneasiness. From that time her health was always on the decline, and her death at last terminated her long protracted sufferings.

The female prisoners were not able to contribute their share to these social enjoyments. It must be said, however, that many had, according to M. de Beauharnais's expression, become sour, peevish, and bad tempered; others had grown impertinent on finding themselves suddenly placed on a level with Court ladies. Amongst the latter, according to general report, was Mdle. Contat, who assumed all the airs of an ill-bred duchess.

Mdle. Devienne (now Madame Gévaudan), whose superior talent has left a void in the Théâtre Français which cannot be easily filled up, was, on the contrary, a polite and agreeable companion, much sought after by all her fellow prisoners, who remarked in her a graceful and obliging disposition. It is rather strange that the *soubrette* should have presented the best pattern of good manners.

On being released from confinement, Mdle. Devienne did not forget those who were still languishing

in prison. She was incessant in her exertions on their behalf, which were frequently crowned with success.

Mdlle. Raucourt, on being restored to liberty, also rendered essential services to her fellow prisoners. She obtained respites for them, which were the means of saving their lives. On a particular occasion, which I cannot at present recall to mind, she conferred an obligation upon Madame de Beauharnais, who always proved grateful for it.

I happened, one day, to enter the dining-room of the Palace of Navarre, at the time of breakfast, and saw a lady whom the Empress had placed near her person, and to whom she was paying particular attention. I told M. de Vieil-Castel that I observed a striking likeness between that lady and Mdlle. Raucourt.

"I can well account for it," he replied, "for it is herself."

She had come from Paris for the purpose of seeing some new plants, which were highly prized by the Empress. They visited the greenhouse, which was inferior to that of Malmaison. Her Majesty explained the means she employed for rearing plants, and gave orders that many of the flowers which excited Mdlle. Raucourt's admiration should be packed up in straw, and presented them to her on her departure as tokens of her gratitude.

Mdlle. Raucourt possessed a handsome estate in

the neighbourhood of Orleans, and cultivated a great number of very rare exotics. I saw there a camellia, brought from Navarre and kept with the utmost care. The naturalisation of that handsome flower among us is entirely owing to Josephine.

LETTER IV.

TO MADAME FANNY DE BEAUHARNAIS.

“DEAREST AUNT: I stand in need of all my strength of mind to impart to you the catastrophe which has just befallen us. You must call your own strength to your aid to enable you to bear the recital of what follows:

“You cannot have failed to pay particular notice to the reflections made by my husband in the presence of his children, which I transmitted to you at the time:

“‘It is not only right that we should offer resistance to oppression, it is even our duty to do so; our conduct must, however, be guided by the rules of prudence, and whosoever attempts to defeat the views of tyranny, or to crush it altogether, must beware of awakening it from its slumbers.’

“It would be difficult for me to explain to you how these expressions, which we imagined had not been uttered within a stranger’s hearing, should have been picked up by spies upon our actions; and I am yet at this moment at a loss to account for the source through which they gained their information. We at

first suspected a shameful abuse of confidence when we imagined that Nevil, in whose presence my husband openly speaks his sentiments, was an ungrateful, treacherous wretch, who, under the most specious and honest appearances, concealed a heart steeped in guilt and atrocity; for in fact we are no longer bound to him by the ties of mere courtesy, but by a sympathetic sentiment emanating from the heart, by a combination of kindred feelings, by that delightful sense of gratitude, of which a favour necessarily imposes the obligation. You will easily understand our readiness indignantly to reject a hypothesis which nevertheless had at first suggested itself to our disturbed imagination; it is one of the most painful consequences of misfortune that it makes us unjust, and renders us suspicious of the sincerity of friendship; for how seldom is it continued to those who are in sorrow! I was right in entertaining a favourable opinion of the conduct of this excellent young man, and in rejecting every idea that was in the least disparaging to his character, since I am again indebted to him for the details I am about to furnish. I remain, therefore, in utter ignorance of the means by which we have been betrayed.

“The Revolutionary Committee was no sooner acquainted with the language uttered by my poor Alexandre than they interdicted all further intercourse between him and the other *détenus*, and, what was

still more distressing to our feelings, all intercourse between him and his own family. The next day he was kept confined to his room, which fortunately opens on a second apartment at present untenanted, by which means the distance which he is at liberty to pace is increased in a threefold degree. Two days afterwards his doors were thrown open, and he received the very unexpected visit of a member of the Committee of General Safety; this was Vadier, his colleague in the Constituent Assembly, a wild, mistrustful old man, who consults in all his actions his habitual misanthropy, and with whom a mere suspicion is equivalent to positive proof. From the tone which he assumed my husband discovered the workings of his prejudices, readily penetrated the personal animosity he bore towards him, and feared to inquire into the object of his visit. For my part, I tremble at the very thought, and were I to dwell on it a moment longer I should lose all power of writing.

“ ‘I do not ask,’ said Alexandre, ‘by what means you have obtained a knowledge of my sentiments; I am far from disowning the maxim you recall to my mind, or the principles you suppose me to entertain. Do not such ideas form the whole theory of the Revolution? Do they not recommend a practice with which you are familiar? Are not those your own principles?’ ”

“‘All this I am ready to admit,’ replied Vadier; ‘but the time, the place in which they are uttered, the individuals before whom they are avowed, constitute the whole difference between us. An axiom, however valuable in a speculative point of view, becomes a dangerous weapon when injudiciously spoken. Your language is of this nature; it is a two-edged sword which has been very properly wielded against the enemies of liberty; but if it should happen that the latter, though wounded in the struggle, still maintained their ground, and attempted to brandish their weapon against the defenders of that liberty, if in that retrograde and guilty manœuvre they were guided by a man who had once opposed them, and who now, standing by their side, should attempt to avenge the wounds they had received in a former conflict, I ask you, could that man be proclaimed innocent? Could the motives which actuated him be considered free from blame? Would it be deemed too great a stretch of severity to prevent his designs rather than to punish their consequences?’

“‘I recognise in these dangerous and unmerited inferences the doctrine of your ruler,’ rejoined M. de Beauharnais; ‘you arbitrarily raise upon treacherous hypotheses the superstructure of the most extravagant suppositions; and concluding that what is barely possible is actually true, you doom the innocent to death in order to prevent his falling into guilt.’

“‘Whosoever is an object of suspicion deserves to be suspected.’

“‘Speak out more openly,’ resumed your nephew, ‘the innocent soon becomes suspected, and he is then not far removed from the scaffold; on the bare suspicion that he may cease to be innocent he is soon consigned to the fate of a criminal.’

“‘You see the consequence,’ retorted Vadier, with less justice than ill humour; ‘we pronounce none to be guilty, we treat none as such except those who interfere with, oppose, or pervert, the principles of the Revolution. May you not possibly have spoken merely because, contrary to our expectation, and unconsciously on our part, this doctrine is applicable to you? Woe to the guilty one who betrays himself!’

“‘Woe much rather,’ exclaimed my husband, ‘to the tyrants who explain, or, to speak more correctly, who perplex their murderous system by the obscurity and artfulness of their metaphysics! It is easy to parry the thrust of a naked sword; and as President du Harlay was wont to say, there is an immeasurable distance between the heart of an honest man and the dagger of an assassin; but how is it possible to escape from the blow of a concealed weapon? We must be silent and submit to be butchered.’

“He had no sooner spoken these words, of which I cannot but disapprove, when the old President of the Committee of General Safety left the room; and

Nevil, who was in the corridor, remarked, as he fancied, in his naturally forbidding countenance, an equivocal expression which foreboded nothing favourable to our cause.

“I shall keep you daily informed of the consequences of this occurrence, which has left me a prey to the most poignant anguish.”

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

Pretended Conspiracy Discovered in the Prison of the Luxembourg. — Citizen Lafiotte. — Madame Fanny de Beauharnais Takes the Children of Her Niece under Her Own Care.

“AN article in this morning’s paper has filled me with terror ; as it will reach you to-morrow, I hasten to send you the antidote to it. You will read in that paper ‘that a great conspiracy has been discovered in the house of confinement at the Luxembourg ; that it has been found out and made known to the public,’ adds the editor, ‘is as much as to say that it has been defeated and even destroyed. One of the leaders appears to be the ex-Vicomte de Beauharnais, a member of the assembly called “the Constituent,” and one of its presidents. From what has been brought to light by intercepted letters, by the seizure of papers, and by the interrogatories that have taken place, it may be taken for granted that nothing less was meditated than a determined resistance to the acts of the Revolutionary Government. This resistance, which had not yet proceeded beyond mere intentions, seemed to

be on the watch for a favourable opportunity of breaking out into open violence. Such was the doctrine, such was intended to be the conduct, of the conspirators. Their guilty manœuvres were promoted by a young man who was attached to Beauharnais, and who appears to have been placed in the Revolutionary Committee of the section in order to screen the conspirators from suspicion. Thanks, however, to citizen Laflotte, the latter now witness the defeat of the plot they meditated for the destruction of liberty; in a few days the watchful eye of Government will have completely unravelled it, and its hand, raised for the purpose of consolidating the foundations of the Republic, will have inflicted punishment upon those who seem to exist for no other object than its overthrow.'

"My dear aunt will bring these high-sounding phrases to their simple and proper meaning. The conspiracy is altogether imaginary; the information, which is in fact attributed to an ex-Ambassador in Tuscany, has produced the movements I have already noticed, but they will probably soon cease. Why, in fact, should they be kept up? Nothing has been discovered, for there was nothing to discover; there can have been no conspirators to punish since there has been no conspiracy. You might, perhaps, for want of better information, have been alarmed at the paragraph in the newspaper; such was its first im-

pression upon myself, but, after a few moments' reflection, and especially since I have begun this letter, I find myself more at ease. Is it necessary to resort to the most exaggerated imposition when a mere statement of facts would be sufficient to carry conviction?

"P. S. — I reopen my letter to tell you that citizen Nevil has been arrested; he has sent me a verbal communication of the fact by a young woman to whom he is attached, and who is betrothed to him. This event banishes my security and revives all my former apprehensions."

Madame Fanny de Beauharnais took under her care the children of Madame Alexandre de Beauharnais during the imprisonment of that most excellent of mothers, who ever retained a lively recollection of this favour. Her gratitude towards her aunt was unbounded, nor did the engagements which her elevated rank afterwards imposed upon her induce her at any time to relax in the demonstration of her sentiments; she always called her a *second mother*, a title justly due to one who felt a truly maternal tenderness for her.

No doubt can be entertained of Josephine's excellent disposition when we find the family of her first husband preserving for her a constant and unshaken attachment. They were lavish of their attentions at the time when her sorrow was at its height, and she

never suffered the mortification of being slighted by her husband's relations, who appeared to have adopted her as one of their own family. I have already noticed the sincere friendship entertained for her by her worthy brother-in-law, the Marquis de Beauharnais.

LETTER VI.

TO THE SAME.

Severity Exercised towards the Prisoners.

“MEASURES of severity which were at first directed against Alexandre have subsequently been extended to five or six of the principal *détenus*, with whom he is supposed to keep up an intercourse; they have at last involved all that part of the building which is separated by a mere partition from the remainder of the palace. The courtyard has been forbidden to those who inhabit that portion of the edifice, and they have frequently been examined. Ever since yesterday they are not allowed to see any one; and, as this prohibition was not made public, the office and the two corridors leading to it have been filled the whole day with their relations and friends, who are in the utmost alarm at their condition. A sinister report was soon spread amongst the first who made their appearance, and who, trembling for the fate of beings they held most dear in life, brought back to the bosoms of their families the terrors to which they had fallen a prey.

“I am at a loss to guess what all this agitation will

lead to; it appears to me that a Government which thus indulges in what may be termed convulsions deems itself very insecure; such repeated precautions rather bespeak weakness and fear than strength and security.

“Pending these troubles, my dear aunt, I am almost pleased to learn that you are confined by indisposition! I recommend you to prolong your absence, however painful it is to my feelings. Your peace of mind which I so much value affords me some relief in my sufferings; and Alexandre sends me word that he bears with patience his repeated vexations as long as he knows us to be free from them.”

LETTER VII.

TO THE SAME.

Her Uneasiness Respecting Her Husband.—Nevil Placed in Close Confinement.

“WHAT a pity I am not more inclined to laugh! for the occurrences that take place here, their atrocity apart, have also their ludicrous side. That wretched story, which merely exists in the imaginations and probably in the interests of those who have invented it, has received a colouring which excites my alarm; they begin to talk of the conspiracy of the Luxembourg in the same manner as the conspiracies of the Gironde, of Sainte-Amaranthe, and of Danton, had been spoken of; judging from the dreadful results to which these latter have led, what have I not to apprehend in the case in which I am so personally interested. A scandalous solemnity has attended the arrest of poor Nevil, and they have given to the motives upon which it was grounded a seemingly ludicrous but in my mind an intentional importance. I dare not dwell too much upon conjectures, which, perhaps, originate in idle fear; but how could a conspiracy have been discovered where none existed?

For some time past much has been said of the embarrassment occasioned by the prisoners, the uneasiness which torments them, the desires they are found to nourish, the projects they are presumed to meditate, their fancied opinions, the means of correspondence either premeditated or already established between them and their connections. Artfully officious paragraphs of newspapers have insinuated the idea that the period was not, perhaps, far distant when the severity of our internal policy, henceforth tempered by a spirit of indulgence, might admit of the prisons being thrown open; and we are forthwith inundated in reply with pamphlets no less atrocious by the doctrines they are paid to inculcate than coarse in their language, wherein it is remarked that there existed more expeditious means of diminishing the numbers of the prisoners. Such is our condition, from which you may readily account for my fears.

“I have been for the last five days without any direct news from Alexandre; I have merely learnt from a doorkeeper that his peace of mind and his health are unimpaired, and that he reads a great deal, with a view to enliven the solitude of the close confinement is which he is still kept. He has asked for a great number of books, which have been freely allowed to pass; not so with respect to the writing-paper, every sheet of which has been counted; he will have to give an account of the use he makes of it.

“Nevil, whom the Government has thought it worth while to arrest in his capacity of a member of the Committee, is kept under still closer confinement. He has not been allowed to see any one for the last forty-eight hours, and it is not known whether he is still in existence. This unexpected measure has so taken him by surprise that he could not provide himself with anything, and one is at a loss to send him what he stands in need of, his place of detention being kept a profound secret. His mother, a most respectable woman, displays a resignation which does not banish her grief, but has the effect of moderating its excess. The young and affectionate friend of Nevil gives free vent to her sorrow; she was on the point of being married to him, and does not blush at evincing her love by the bitterness of her affliction. I have promised to make every inquiry respecting this young man, in whom I feel an interest little short of what they bear him. I am grieved to think that he should stand in need of my repaying him any part of the services he has rendered us.”

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madame Alexandre de Beauharnais Receives a Written Warning that She Is to Be Immediately Taken to Prison. — She Refuses to Avail Herself of this Intimation. — She Is Arrested.

“I BEGIN this letter at all hazards, not knowing whether it will ever reach your hands. Ere yesterday, Tuesday, Nevil’s mother called upon me with a sorrowful countenance and a physiognomy which indicated that her mind was greatly agitated—the recollection of her son immediately occurred to me.

“‘I do not weep for him,’ said this worthy woman, in sobbing accents; ‘although he is closely confined, I have no apprehension for his life; he belongs to a class which is easily forgiven, or rather easily forgotten; other persons are in greater danger than he is.’

“Others? My mind instantly turned to the Luxembourg.

“‘Is Alexandre before the tribunal?’ I exclaimed.

“‘Compose yourself, there is no question about him.’

“These words at once appeased my alarm. The considerate creature then explained to me with the utmost circumspection that I was the individual in danger ; my terror immediately subsided. When we have been in a state of anxiety for those we love, how pleasing the reflection that we have only to dread for ourselves !

“I received last night an anonymous letter which warned me of the danger. I might have fled, but where could I go without compromising my husband ? Determined to await the event, I sent for my children, and in their innocent caresses I might have forgotten my adversities had not their very presence more forcibly recalled their father’s absence to my mind. Sleep tore them from my arms, to which they seemed instinctively to cling with more than usual fondness. Alas ! the love which binds a mother to her children is not free from superstition, and I know not what unconquerable presentiment plunged me into a state of terror which deprived me of every faculty. You may judge whether, when left alone, I was enabled to resist this painful sensation ! Heaven, nevertheless, can bear me witness that the three fond beings in whom all my happiness is centred are also the exclusive causes of my affliction ; how can I think of self when their comfort or peace is endangered !

“I was deeply plunged in these reflections when a loud noise was heard at the door of my hôtel. I now

understood that my hour was come, and finding myself fully prepared to meet the unavoidable blow which was about to strike me, I resigned myself to my fate. Whilst the noise went on increasing, I repaired to my children's bedroom; they were fast asleep, and the contrast between their peaceful slumbers and their mother's agitation forced tears from my eyes. Alas! I imprinted on the forehead of my daughter the last kiss I should, perhaps, ever give her; she felt the maternal tears upon her cheek, and though fast asleep, threw her caressing arms around my neck.

“‘Retire to rest,’ said the child, in broken accents, ‘and fear nothing; they will not come to-night; I have asked it of God in my prayers.’”

“Meanwhile, people were crowding into my apartment, where I found at the head of a set of ferocious armed men the old President, whose very debility renders him inhuman, and whose indolence gives rise in his mind to such extravagant suspicions. Those which he entertained against me were sufficient, in his opinion, to warrant my arrest. I perceived that without any previous examination, and contrary to all probability, he firmly believed in what is so boldly and yet so foolishly called the Luxembourg conspiracy. When stupidity and wickedness are combined, there are no limits to the mischief they promote!

“I spare you every useless detail; what I have

said is quite enough to distress you. Suffice it to know that the seals were affixed to every article of furniture which was under lock and key, and that I was taken to the House of Detention of the Carmelites. Great was my terror as I crossed that threshold still reeking with the blood of human victims! Alas! dearest aunt, those men are not far from the commission of every crime who have suffered such atrocious ones to go unpunished!"

LETTER IX.

TO MADAME PARKER, LONDON.

Narrative of What Takes Place in the Prison in Which Madame de Beauharnais Is Confined. — Her Deportment in that Abode of Grief.

“WE have here, my dearest friend, two contrasts which are seldom noticed, notwithstanding that they come under our daily observation ; and I have taken it into my head to converse with you on the subject. Last night I had a good account of my children ; to-day I have hopes respecting my husband’s business ; can anything be better calculated to promote our appetite, our slumbers, or our cheerfulness ? I have, therefore, no reason to complain on the latter score ; and, in order to improve my good spirits, I must have some conversation with your dear self.

“ You are young, rich, handsome, witty, adored by an amiable husband, and eagerly courted by a circle of society which applauds your talents and delights in its display ; what, then, can be wanting to your happiness ? I have a very scanty fortune, am still more deficient in beauty, have no pretensions, and very moderate expectations. How, then,

can I enjoy any happiness? Philosophers of grave deportment would enter into a long dissertation to solve this question, and the problem would become still more complicated were I to add that the one person, though living in the land of independence and freedom, gives way to despondency, whilst the other preserves her peace of mind in a land of slavery and within the walls of a prison. If we attempt to explain this inconsistency by the contrast in our dispositions, we do not remove the difficulty but rather retard its solution. Let us, in fact, consider to what cause may be owing any difference of character between two individuals.

“My dear Clara yields to her inclination when she confides to me her troubles, and describes them in exaggerated colours; I, on the other hand, follow my natural impulse when I relate to her what another person would call her sorrows, but what to me appear a motive of satisfaction, since a slight ray of hope has for the last forty-eight hours beamed upon my solitude and distress.

“Would you desire to know, my dearest friend, what can possibly convey a keen and heartfelt pleasure to an inmate of this prison? Two circumstances, I reply, which naturally suggest themselves to the mind, the parody of high life and the simplicity of retirement. I must explain my meaning.

“Men of elevated rank, having been the first in-

mates of this place, had transferred to its cells the pomp of the old Court, and consequently the *ennui* which attends it. With the increase of inmates, visits went on increasing as well as set parties, and all the forms and ceremonies of etiquette which were invented for no other object than to conceal the weariness ever attendant upon high rank.

“On beholding this wretched pomp and ephemeral dignity, newcomers devised the plan of destroying them by holding them up to ridicule. The weapon of exaggeration was sufficient to effect that object; accordingly, the most indifferent acts were wrapped up in a disguise of authoritative gravity; the prisoners accosted each other with measured steps, exchanged a good-morrow in a declamatory language; by degrees they raised their tone to the diapason of haughtiness, if I may be allowed the expression; they clothed the most common occurrences of private life in the exaggerated language of romance, which they spoke with the emphasis of tragic actors. Such tiresome pretensions would have been deemed the height of ridicule at Versailles or in the Faubourg Saint-Germain; you may well suppose how little they were relished within the precincts of a small prison.

“Some men of sound understanding readily perceived that the only way to banish the *ennui* which had followed in the train of those chimerical notions was to restore the ascendancy of reason with its nat-

ural attendants, amiability, wit, good taste, to which modesty and simplicity would soon add their peculiar charm. Head-dresses *à crochets* and embroidered garments were brought in contact with the Revolution now springing up; they kept up for a time a successful struggle against it; and only yielded after an obstinate defence. They had just been defeated when I made my appearance in the prison.

“From that moment the most unreserved freedom succeeded to the slavery of etiquette; outward appearances were discarded for more substantial marks of friendship. It was felt that all should contribute their share to the pleasures of society; personal feelings gave way to those of fellow companions in misfortune; their sentiments were sometimes adopted; or if opposed, the contest was no longer carried on in anger, as had formerly been the case. Names and titles, to which habitual deference had for ages been paid, were still treated with the respect they were wont to claim; but the regard which springs from the heart was exclusively bestowed upon social qualities, upon talents which promoted the cheerfulness of our community, and virtues which commanded its admiration. It is foreign from our purpose to inquire whether those whose lofty pretensions were their only claim upon us inwardly treated as Revolutionists all innovators whose personal merit was their only title to attention.

“Such is our condition at the present moment. From an assemblage of a hundred and sixty *détenus* who are the inmates of the prison, five or six private circles have been formed, consisting of persons brought together by uniformity of sentiments and tempers. Others, who live on a still more intimate footing, are united by affections of a more endearing nature. The latter remain isolated and retired within themselves, and seldom join in the general mirth, which they are never found to interrupt. For my part, independently of some friends and acquaintances I have fallen in with, I am on terms with every one, and have an ample field for exercising my disposition to console the afflicted and weep with the unfortunate. This reminds me, my dear Clara, that you conceive yourself to belong to the latter class, and as such you have a right to claim some share of the exertions I bestow upon others. Nevertheless, I must for the present confine myself to giving you the assurance of an approaching improvement in my condition. May not this have at least the temporary effect of softening your grief ?

“Need I tell you how sincerely I participate in it, however imaginary it may appear ? My sufferings on your account correspond in extent with your sorrows. The greatest of misfortunes is to doubt the sincerity of those we love ; but this is a mortification we neither of us have to apprehend. Adieu, my dear,

and keep up your spirits. Can such an advice proceed from one who is confined in a prison? Would she not seem to stand in need of the consolation she is endeavouring to impart to you? My children are well. M. de Beauharnais's case assumes a more favourable turn; how, then, could I be wanting in courage? I must now bid you farewell."

I have already observed that Madame de Beauharnais was never dejected from the effects of her imprisonment. The other inmates of the prison were of a far more desponding turn.

Any one acquainted with her tenderness of feeling, her constant anxiety to afford assistance to others, could not but lament that this excellent woman should have stood in need of the means of relieving her acquaintances who were like herself deprived of their liberty; her chief regret at her imprisonment was that it prevented her from being useful. She forgot that her gentle disposition, her lively and fascinating wit, were a source of consolation to all her companions.

Averse to every kind of discussion, keeping herself aloof from every party, and abhorring every political conversation, she lived on friendly terms with the different circles of society in the prison, divided as they were in opinion, and engaged in angry disputes which were frequently appeased by Madame de Beauhar-

nais's conciliating attentions. Condescending towards her inferiors, even-tempered and amiable in her intercourse with her equals, polite towards those who deemed themselves her superiors, she won the affections of all. In a prison, or whether seated on the first throne in the world, she was beloved by all classes, and always held the place amongst them which most became her. She had an innate perception of the rules of propriety, which prevented her from being borne down by the insolence of others in the days of her affliction; and when she afterwards became Empress she cautiously avoided all display of her superior rank.

I never heard Josephine mention the name of Madame Parker, who was probably dead when I became acquainted with the Empress, but who must have been a lady of superior acquirements, since she had inspired so warm an affection to Madame de Beauharnais, whose distinguished qualities she so fully appreciated. To discriminate real merit proves the possession of it by one who, although in affluent and brilliant circumstances, could form a warm attachment for a friend in distress; this must be allowed on all hands to be no ordinary occurrence.

LETTER X.

TO MADAME FANNY DE BEAUHARNAIS.

Madame de Fontenay in Prison. — By What Means She Communicated to Tallien that She Is to Be Shortly Brought before the Public Tribunal.

“I HAVE received, my dearest aunt, the beautiful fruit you sent me, together with the note you so ingeniously contrived to enclose in one of them. God be praised, my children are now under your care; this is a great consolation to me. Would that my husband were with them! I have no tidings of him, any more than of Nevil, whose mother has not yet been allowed to see me. I leave you to judge of my uneasiness! All my companions endeavour to dispel it; but the wounded feelings of a wife and a mother are not so accessible to hope and consolation!”

The prisoners had no means of conveying or receiving any important communication except by resorting to such extraordinary means as their ingenuity could devise for the purpose of lulling the active vigilance exercised over every object which was introduced into or was taken away from the prison.

It is said that Madame de Fontenay (afterwards Madame Tallien *), having obtained positive information that she should in a few days be summoned before the Convention, wrote a note to Tallien and concealed it in the heart of a cabbage, which she threw to him from a window he was in the habit of approaching for the purpose of getting a glimpse of her through the gratings. She informed him of the fate which was reserved for her, and concluded in these words: "If you love me as sincerely as you profess to do, use every effort to save France, and myself along with her."

The warmth of Tallien's affection suggested to him the project which brought the crimes of Robespierre to a close; thus the fate of our dear country depended upon a piece of cabbage more or less dexterously flung by the weak hand of a woman!

* Now *Princesse de Chimay*.

LETTER XI.

TO THE SAME.

Examination of M. de Beauharnais.

“ALEXANDRE was examined yesterday, and I am to-morrow to receive the permission I have applied for. The President of the Committee is a tolerably civil man, but of a cold disposition and an absolute nonentity. His excessive corpulency deprives him of motion, of thought, and almost of the use of speech. With the best intentions in the world, he has less power than the lowest clerk in the office. He comes late, reaches his armchair with difficulty, heavily falls into it, and, when once seated, remains a quarter of an hour without uttering a word. Meanwhile, a secretary reads aloud some reports which the President does not hear, although he has the appearance of listening to them. He sometimes falls asleep during the perusal, and yet he never fails to awake from his slumbers at the precise moment when he is to sign what he has neither listened to nor understood. With respect to the examinations, which are opened by himself, and followed up by each of his colleagues, some of them are of the most atrocious character, but

the greater part are merely ridiculous. All are more or less of a singular nature.

“What, in fact, can be more extraordinary than that the most valuable members of society should be called upon to explain their thoughts to those who, notwithstanding their sudden elevation, are still its veriest dregs? My aunt will not understand by this that I allude to birth, fortune, or privileges; by no means, but to principles, feelings, and individual worth.

“The President of the Committee, for instance, is in his circumstances a gentleman. He is well off in the world, and is not altogether devoid of education. He is a Revolutionist through selfish motives; and until the Presidency restored him to his former good case, he had fallen off through mere fright. Regardless, at present, of the fate of the victims to whose numbers he contributes his share, he grows fat from pure indolence. I think I have designated him as an upright man. Can he be so, however, when he sacrifices men of real worth in order to secure his own tranquillity? How much more estimable in my sight is the worthy and considerate Nevil, who has, perhaps, the weakness of carrying too far his already exaggerated political ideas, but who likewise sets no bounds to his love of humanity! What devotedness and attachment, when he believes a person to be innocent! What zeal towards the unfortunate! We owe everything to him.

Shall I tell you the motive of his regard for Alexandre ? It springs from a respect for his principles. An attentive perusal of the newspapers has instilled into his mind the highest esteem for the Constituent Assembly ; and he no sooner learnt that a member of that assembly was about to fall into the clutches of his Committee than he sought to be entrusted with the duty of assisting him. You know the rest.

“ Subjoined I send you my husband’s examination, in which you will find the most atrocious features coupled with the most ridiculous ones ; these are the two colours of the period we live in.

“ *Brief Extracts of the Examination of Citizen
Alexandre Beauharnais.*

“ *President* : ‘ Who art thou ? ’

“ *M. de Beauharnais* : ‘ A man and a Frenchman.’

“ *President* : ‘ Spare us thy jokes ; I ask what is thy name ? ’

“ *M. de Beauharnais* : ‘ Eugène Alexandre de Beauharnais.’

“ *A Member* : ‘ Drop the *de* if you please ; it savours too much of the aristocrat.’

“ *M. de Beauharnais* : ‘ You mean to say that there is something feudal in it. A name without a particle before it is undoubtedly more consonant with reason. The fault, if there be any, is to be ascribed to times gone by and to my ancestors.’

“Another Member: ‘Oh! thou claimest an ancestry; it is well that we have heard this frank avowal. Citizens, be pleased to notice that he has ancestors, and does not disguise it.’ (In this stage of the proceedings, nine members of the Committee, out of the twelve composing it, betook themselves to laughing.)

“One of the nine, in the midst of the prevailing hilarity, assumed a grave countenance, and said, with the utmost composure:

“‘Fool that he is, does he not know that an ancestry is nothing better than an old parchment? Is it the man’s fault if his patents were not consigned to the flames? Citizen, thou art commanded to deposit them with the Committee; and I can assure thee that a large bonfire shall soon give us a good account of thy ancestors.’

“At these words the worthy Council burst into a loud fit of laughter, and the bulky President found great difficulty in restoring it to its gravity and composure. This explosion of mirth had, however, the effect of rendering the President more tractable; he politely addressed the accused in these words:

“‘Citizen, you may sit down.’

“A Member, rising from his chair, exclaimed with great warmth: ‘I demand to be heard. I vote that the Citizen President be called to order, for having *voutoyé** the suspected citizen. It does not follow

* The meaning of which is — for having said *you* to him instead of *thou*. — Translator.

Alexandre de Beauharnais

Photo-etch from a very rare print



ALEXANDRE BEAUHARNOIS

*Député du Dép^t du Loir et du Cher
Ex président de l'Assemblée Nale
Constituante de 1789.*

because he is suspected that he is therefore guilty. So long as the Tribunal has not pronounced a sentence of condemnation, every one has a claim to be addressed by the pronoun thou.'

" '*Monsieur* Violette should be censured for his want of civility.'

" On hearing the qualification of *monsieur* given to the President, the assembly exhibited a fresh scene of laughter, noise, and confusion. The last speaker was for some time at a loss to understand how he could have occasioned them. Order was at length restored, and my husband seized the first moment of silence to congratulate the Committee on the harmless subjects of its discussions, and to express his satisfaction at having for his judges magistrates of so cheerful a temper.

" *The President, with an air of importance and gravity*: 'If thou shouldst mistake our proceedings for a mere farce, thou wouldst greatly deceive thyself. The suspected citizen is quite right, colleagues, when he styles us his judges; this qualification should restore us to our wonted gravity. If it were allowable formerly to indulge in mirth, it now behooves us to comport ourselves with gravity.'

" *M. de Beauharnais*: 'The latter character distinguishes the new *régime* from the old.'

" *President*: 'Let us now proceed seriously to business, and follow up the examination. Citizen Jarbac

(*one of the secretaries*), art thou ready? (*To M. de Beauharnais.*) What are thy titles and qualifications?’

“*M. de Beauharnais*: ‘A French citizen, a general in the service of the Republic.’

“*A Member*: ‘President, he does not tell everything; he is an ex ——’

“*Another Member*: ‘Prince or baron.’

“*M. de Beauharnais, smiling*: ‘Viscount, if you please; it is quite enough.’

“*President*: ‘It is far too much; thou acknowledgest that thou art a noble?’

“*M. de Beauharnais*: ‘I acknowledge I was so considered, and I believed it for some time under the *régime* of ignorance, old habits, and prejudices.’

“*President*: ‘Confess that thou art not yet wholly undeceived on the subject.’

“*M. de Beauharnais*: ‘The obstinacy with which some men of limited understanding persist in fighting a mere shadow is enough to give it a kind of reality. For my part, I have long since banished the illusion. Common sense had taught me that there could exist no other distinctions than those which are the reward of virtues, public services, or distinguished talents; considerations of the soundest policy have satisfied me that these alone should be maintained in force.’

“*Citizen Nevil*: ‘This is reasoning upon correct principles!’

“ President : ‘ Without disputing the soundness of the consequences, where did the citizen derive those principles in which he prides himself ? In the Constituent Assembly ? ’

“ M. de Beauharnais : ‘ I am proud of having been a member of that assembly. ’

“ President : ‘ You have even presided over it ? ’

“ M. de Beauharnais : ‘ Just so, citizen, and at a very memorable epoch. ’

“ President : ‘ Was it not at the period of the tyrant’s flight ? ’

“ M. de Beauharnais : ‘ It was at the time when Louis XVI. proceeded to Varennes, and when he returned from thence. ’

“ A Member : ‘ I would lay a wager that the citizen does not believe Louis Capet to have been a tyrant. ’

“ M. de Beauharnais : ‘ History will explain that point, and posterity will pronounce judgment. ’

“ Citizen Nevil : ‘ We have nothing to do with citizen Beauharnais’s thoughts, but with his actions. ’

“ President : ‘ Very true, most true ; let us then inquire into what citizen Beauharnais has done. ’

“ M. de Beauharnais : ‘ Nothing whatever ; and in these stormy times I really think it was the wisest course. ’

“ President : ‘ Thou hast not therefore espoused any party ? ’

“ M. de Beauharnais : ‘ I have not, if by party you

mean the factions which detest each other, throw the State into convulsion, prevent the laws from holding paramount sway, and retard the consolidation of the Republic ; but if by that word you understand the immense majority of Frenchmen whose wishes are in favour of independence and liberty, to this party I certainly belong.'

" *A Member*: 'We are yet to be told what course thou wouldst adopt?'

" *M. de Beauharnais*: 'I should prefer persuading by the arguments of reason, and convincing by those to which our hearts yield a willing assent; nevertheless, I am of opinion that physical force may be resorted against the alternate disguise and violence of anarchical factions. But I could wish that the latter mode of proceeding should not degenerate into abuse, that it were seldom adopted, and that rigorous measures should as much as possible be tempered with humanity whenever the safety of the State permits its exercise.'

" *A Member (this was the wicked old man who was directed to arrest my husband)*: 'Humanity! humanity, indeed! I mistrust this language when spoken by certain people.'

" *M. de Beauharnais*: 'It ought to be mistrusted, if it bespeaks pity for criminals of one's own way of thinking ; but it is entitled to every deference when spoken on behalf of error and inexperience.'

" *A Member* : ' All moderate men utter the same sentiments.'

" *M. de Beauharnais* : ' Moderation is the offspring of good sense and the parent of strength. Why should I, when in the enjoyment of good health, give way to violence and agitation if I find that composure and the exercise of reason add to my physical and moral strength.'

" *Citizen Nevil* : ' I assure you, citizens, that neither Rousseau, Mably, nor Montesquieu have ever written anything more sensible than what the accused has just spoken.'

" *A Member* : ' Who are those people ? Do they belong to the section ?'

" *Another Member* : ' Dost thou not see that they are *feuillans* ? This is the language of the moderate party, and is most hateful and pernicious.'

" *President* : ' Citizens, you are mistaken ; those are the names of authors belonging to the age of Louis XIV., whose tragedies are constantly performed at the Théâtre Français.'

" The Revolutionary club now divided itself into two parties ; some claiming the right of turning the President into ridicule, others maintaining or combating the correctness of the new discovery he had just been adding to the stores of literary knowledge. M. de Beauharnais would have smiled at the blunder,

had it not excited a painful sensation in his breast from a consideration of the character of those men to whose hands the fate of his fellow citizens was committed.

“Nevil endeavoured to bring this ludicrous and pitiful sitting to a close by giving a greater degree of consistency to the examination.

“After a few more questions, which were either unmeaning or inapplicable, the President, unable to discover any circumstance that could criminate my husband, came to the conclusion that he should be kept for the present under arrest.

“‘The Revolutionary vigilance,’ said he, ‘will thereby be enabled to find more tangible grounds of charge, and thou, citizen, shalt also have more leisure to enter upon thy defence. If thy country be dear to thee, thou shalt render it as good a service by a spirit of resignation as by the most active exertions in its behalf, and if liberty is valuable in thy sight, it will become still more so by thy protracted imprisonment. Accordingly, I consign thee back again to prison, by no means as a guilty man, but as liable to become such. Thou shalt be entered in the registers of the Luxembourg with this favourable note in the margin: *Accused of being suspected.*’”

Nothing affords a better proof of the elevation of mind, the calmness and moderation of M. de Beau-

harnais, than the above absurd examination. Will posterity ever believe that men of such profound ignorance could have acted for several months in the character of judges over their fellow creatures? Will it be credited that such cold and atrocious cruelty which *trifles* with, at the moment of *condemning*, its victims could have been tolerated by a nation proud of its generous feelings? Too young to have witnessed such scenes, I can hardly persuade myself that my fellow countrymen do not exaggerate in their description of them. What they relate bears a resemblance to sanguinary tragedies, the offspring of fanatical minds delighting in the most painful emotions. But, alas! they are facts of which every family has had to lament the fatal consequences; mine has borne its share of them! . . . I must therefore, however reluctantly, give credit to narratives which our descendants will indignantly reject as fabulous. They will only admit the truth of what may appear in accordance with the better feelings of their fellow countrymen. Why are we so near the period of events which ought to be obliterated from our records, theretofore never sullied by such atrocities! but we cannot dispute the evidence of facts! . . . This is the misfortune of the epoch we live in, which is in other respects so fertile in deeds of glory and in the brightest prospects.

LETTER XII.

TO CITIZEN ALEXANDRE DE BEAUHARNAIS.

Citizen Saint-Just. — M. de Saint-Just, Author of "The Caliph of Bagdad," of "Jean de Paris," etc. — Madame de Saint-Just. — Pension Granted to Mdle. Robespierre.

"CAN it be possible that Providence relents in its anger, and that the Government, having now acquired more stability, is about to substitute measures of clemency for the system of coercion hitherto pursued? Since the day before yesterday there has been some relaxation in the strict vigilance exercised over us, and communications from without the prison are admitted after a very superficial inspection. The report gains ground that Saint-Just* has had a warm

* We must not confound the Saint-Just in question with M. de Saint-Just, the lively author of many delightful comic operas, such as "The Caliph of Bagdad," "Jean de Paris," etc., who died two years ago. The latter was a man of mild and gentle disposition, who never meddled with politics; possessed of a large fortune, he was exclusively intent upon promoting the happiness of all around him. His refined and entertaining conversation drew to his house the most distinguished artists and literary characters, whom he felt a pleasure to encourage and to assist with pecuniary means when they happened to be in distress. Amiable in his intercourse, indulgent towards every one, he was generally regretted when an inflammatory complaint deprived literature and his friends of so valuable a member of society. I cannot forget his kind attentions to me, and eagerly avail myself of this opportunity of paying

altercation with several members of the Committee on the subject of Robespierre: it is further said that the latter is desirous of adopting a different system; surfeited with the number of victims he has already immolated, his political ideas have undergone a change; but he finds in the opinions of his colleagues an invincible obstacle to his views. Saint-Just is a young man of very extraordinary merit, and we have often lamented that fatality which drove him into a career of cruelty and danger; as little could we be surprised at Robespierre's returning to sentiments of humanity. The man who after long wandering from the right road has dared to proclaim a God in the face of his impious fellow men cannot harbour a ferocious heart.

"It is said that in consequence of this altercation, which does him great honour, he has withdrawn himself from the Committees, thereby throwing upon his colleagues all the odium of their sanguinary deeds. This occurrence has, however, had its due influence

to his memory the homage of the respect I owed to him. Far greater talents and eloquence will, no doubt, be exerted in his praise; but it can never be told in language of more unaffected sincerity. The second wife of M. de Saint-Just was Mdlle. Tourette, the sister-in-law of the celebrated Cherubini. This choice is equally creditable to the author of it and to its object; for, with the exception of a fortune, Mdlle. Tourette was possessed of every qualification which can recommend a woman. The disinterestedness of her conduct at the death of M. de Saint-Just rendered her still more worthy of being the partner of a man who was always bent upon devising the means of promoting the happiness of his fellow creatures.

upon those who live in hopes, as well as those who give way to despondency. With us a sensation of joy was experienced which partook as much of astonishment as of enthusiasm. By degrees our first transports subsided, and made way for a no less pleasing though more calm conviction of security. Are these hopes too sanguine? I look to my dear Alexandre's opinion on the subject ere I too freely indulge them.

"The appearance of a pamphlet by Camille Desmoulins has just been made known to us as an extraordinary occurrence; you are, perhaps, already apprised of it.

"It is said that, under the thin veil of the Court of Tiberius, he gives a description of the cruelties of the present day; this is a bold attempt, but he is reported to have written under Robespierre's dictation; if so, there is no danger in the act, which would otherwise be one of great temerity.

"Desenne has sent to our hôtel two copies of the above work; one of them is for my dear Alexandre. May it enable you to pass a good night!"

Madame de Beauharnais, like all those who are afflicted, eagerly laid hold of every circumstance calculated to calm her intense sufferings. This is, no doubt, the cause of her having so completely mistaken the character of Robespierre, which was unquestionably a compound of every vice. Timid

young men may have been drawn away from the paths of virtue by the influence of attractive doctrines, and may by degrees have become, through fear, almost as cruel as their leaders; but the man who so long beheld torrents of blood flowing by his orders, and could find rest after signing a series of proscriptions, was a monster whom no one can attempt to justify. His memory must ever be held in abhorrence.

It is asserted that his sister obtained a pension under the different Governments which succeeded the one of 1793, and that it is even continued to her under the Bourbons. I can hardly believe it; faults are, no doubt, purely personal in their application; can there, however, be any necessity for *rewarding* the relations of the tyrant of France? Would it not be better to devote those funds to the relief of the widows and orphans of the gallant men who have died in the field of glory, bequeathing to the objects dearest to them no other legacy than an honourable name?

LETTER XIII.

TO DOCTOR PORTAL.

MM. Magendie, Auvity, Prunet, Heurteloup, etc., M. Horeau.

“LOSE not a moment, dear doctor; fly to the Committee of *Surveillance*, where you will receive a permission to visit the Luxembourg. You will there find *one of your clients*, who, notwithstanding his incarceration, has not forgotten the engagement he made with you of being ill for at least a fortnight every year. His illness is now come upon him, and the engagement on his part is about to be fulfilled; but let it not last beyond a fortnight; you understand me, doctor; I make you personally answerable for the result. This would be a tedious delay were he at liberty to enjoy himself; but within the precincts of a prison, sickness whiles away the time, provided it is not fatal to the patient, and an agreeable physician affords a diversion to both.”

M. Portal was always what he is at the present day, a man of profound learning, of the kindest disposition, and generally esteemed. He rendered many important services at a time when humanity

was considered as a crime, since it might withdraw a victim from the executioner's axe. No danger was ever known to check the zeal of the Dean of the Faculty, who in his now advanced age maintains all the cheerfulness of his early days. Honoured with the regard of his sovereign, he has the satisfaction to reflect that he has undeviatingly followed a career the more honourable when, as in his case, it is dignified by an adherence to the most exalted virtues.

Many of our young physicians may be reckoned in the number of those who promise to follow so proud an example ; we particularly notice MM. Magendie, Auvity, Prunet, Roger, Heurteloup, etc. I feel happy at this opportunity of mentioning the names of individuals who are the hopes of the rising generation, which will find in them what we discovered in their great predecessor — science and virtue combined.

I pass over the name of M. Horeau, who is frequently mentioned in the course of this work ; he lives in a country retirement, and no longer practises the medical art.

LETTER XIV.

M. DE BEAUHARNAIS TO HIS WIFE.

His Opinion Respecting Robespierre.—His Fortitude of Mind.—Mdlle. de Sombreuil.—Mesdames de Bellegarde.—Bayard, François I., Duguesclin, Turenne, de Condé, Vauban, Maréchal de Saxe, Napoleon, Ney, Murat, Victor, Massena, Suchet, Macdonald, de Pérignon, Kellermann, Their Serene Highnesses, the Ducs d'Orléans and de Montpensier.—Comtes de Forbin d'Oppède, de Juillac, de Marin, d'Aubenton.—Mesdames de Sainte-Marie, Ducrest, de Caquerai.—MM. de la Rochefoucauld, Saint-Aldegonde, de Kersalun, de Goisson, de Fougny.—Mesdames de Flahault, de Genlis.—Noble Act of an Intendant. Death of My Father's Valet de Chambre.—M. Detachment.—Avaricious Trait of the Marquis d'A——.

“How much you are mistaken, my poor dear wife ! You are led away by hope ; but in our times hope is deceitful and treacherous.” I have attentively read the work of Camille Desmoulins ; it denotes a good heart, but evidently proves him to be a dupe. You tell me that he writes under Robespierre's dictation ; this is very possible, but, after having urged him on, the tyrant will sacrifice him. I well know the obsti-

nacy of that man, who shrinks at no difficulty, and who, to promote the triumph of his nefarious system, would act, if necessary, the part of a man of feeling.

“Listening to the dictates of pride, Robespierre fancies himself called to regenerate France; but as he is a man of confined views and of a cold heart, he sees no effectual regeneration beyond that of shedding torrents of blood; it is for him the easiest course, as his victims are pent up within a certain space, and the ferocious monster has only to stretch out his hand and drag them to the slaughter. Some of them, however, have been heard to utter piercing exclamations in their dying agonies; and the simple Camille Desmoulins is directed to repeat the words, with a view to sound public opinion. Be the expression of that opinion what it may, some will be found to oppose it, and the tyrant will avail himself of this opportunity to bring fresh victims to the slaughter. Such is, more or less, his mode of proceeding.

“It is very painful to me, my dear Josephine, to destroy the illusion to which your heart has given way; but can I entertain any who have been so close an observer of the manœuvres to which tyranny is wont to resort? When we are unable to crush it by main force, our only means of resistance consists in receiving its blows with a fortitude which is a reproach and disgrace to it. Those who come after us will at least profit by our example, and the bequest

made to posterity by the victims of proscription will not be lost to mankind."

M. de Beauharnais followed the maxim which he had recommended to his wife. All his actions bore witness that, although he had not been more proof than others against the attractive philanthropy which prevailed at the beginning of the Revolution, and, accordingly, longed for alterations in the system of government, nevertheless, lofty sentiments, and the love of virtue and of country, were guides from which he never swerved. At his death he evinced the greatest fortitude of mind, and was regretted by those who were least disposed to coincide in his political opinions.

Such must ever be the ascendancy of a frank and open character. General esteem cannot fail to be its reward, especially in times of agitation, where everything is eagerly laid hold of which is calculated to afford relief to the mind, so often and so powerfully affected by mean or cruel actions. In the midst of the atrocities committed during the Reign of Terror, was it not a consolation to contemplate the sublime act of self-devotedness performed by Mdle. de Sombreuil,* the noble conduct of Mesdames de

* Married at Avignon, Mdle. de Sombreuil resides there in the midst of friends, who are lavish of those attentions to her which are so justly due to her gentle and amiable disposition, and to the precarious state of

Périgord and de Monaco, and of so many others exposing themselves to almost certain death in order to save the objects of their affections? In our admiration for such acts, we become reconciled to mankind, which so many circumstances would otherwise cause us to abhor. Had it not been for these heroic traits, and the surprising valour of our armies, who defended their territory, but strictly conformed within themselves to the laws of justice, the name of a Frenchman would be branded with disgrace. Virtue on the one hand, and honour and bravery on the other, have maintained for us the rank which we claim as a nation, whose happiness and tranquillity are, henceforth, secured by the wisdom of the laws.

I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of adverting in this place to the affectionate attachment shewn by Mesdames de Bellegarde * who daily visited a friend in captivity, and brought her whatever could contribute to mitigate her distress. Young, handsome, and full of wit, they succeeded in exciting the pity of the ferocious keepers, and seldom failed in the objects they were so generously bent upon accomplishing. They seldom went away without satisfying themselves that their friend had received what they had brought for her use. The interest displayed by these ladies

her health irretrievably destroyed by the unexampled courage she displayed on the occasion to which I have alluded.

* One of them was married to her cousin, a general officer in the service of Austria, who came to Paris in the year 1814.

in the fate of a prisoner was calculated to bring upon them the most cruel persecutions ; nevertheless they persisted, and escaped as if by a miracle the dangers which beset every one possessed of distinguished qualities and solid merit.

Our armies gave at all times signal proofs of valour ; this is a truth which none would venture to deny ; our annals sufficiently attest that on the field of battle the French were formerly what they are now. The names of Dunois, Bayard, François I., Duguesclin, Turenne, De Condé, Vauban, Napoleon, Maréchals Ney, Murat, Victor, Massena, De Pérignon, Suchet, Macdonald, Kellermann, and of a countless number of other heroes, are linked with the victories achieved in every epoch of our history ; but whilst foreigners extolled our glory and our science in the art of warfare, they affected to exaggerate the levity of this nation of conquerors.

There exists no evil without its admixture of good ; thus it is that the Revolution, the scourge of our days, has been the means of exhibiting the courage of Frenchmen under every form and aspect. In France, those who were unhappily condemned to death met their honourable doom with a fortitude which can never be sufficiently admired. The emigrants displayed no less elevation and energy of character in the protracted agony they had to endure ; during their too long exile from their native country they

no doubt encountered less imminent dangers than those who had remained in France; can it be said, however, that they evinced less heroism in bearing with every kind of privation, with misery and want, which threatened to terminate their existence after prolonged and cruel sufferings? So far from being depressed by the misfortunes which assailed them in every way, the nobility, whose life had generally been passed in a continued round of pleasures, showed of what exertions they were capable rather than submit to the necessity of soliciting public relief; the aged alone and the infirm resorted to mechanical occupations, foreign from the habits and inclinations of this wandering and deserted crowd of fugitives; talents and industry supplied the place of fortune, and men of high rank did not blush at undertaking pursuits which spared them the mortification of depending upon the bounty of others.

His Highness, the Duc d'Orléans, became tutor in a public school in Switzerland, and his brother, the Duc de Montpensier, exerted his distinguished talent for painting, by which he earned an honourable livelihood.

The Comtes de Forbin d'Oppède,* de Juillac, de

* M. Forbin d'Oppède kindly consented to give me during the emigration gratuitous lessons on the piano; and he received no other return than the most giddy treatment on my part, which he bore with as much patience as he did the false notes I played for him; it is only of late years I have learned the extent of my obligations towards him; I am happy, therefore, at having this opportunity of acknowledging them.

Marin, and d'Aubenton turned their knowledge of music to more or less advantage. The Marquises de Sainte-Marie, Ducrest, de Caquerai, gave public concerts and lessons of singing and of the pianoforte; MM. de La Rochefoucauld and de Sainte-Aldegonde became linen drapers; the Comtes de Kersalun, de Fumel, de Quatrebarbe, de Goisson, established furnished hotels and coffee-houses; the Comte de Fougny, a man of acknowledged good taste, became a dealer in millinery; others taught French, history, etc., manufactured pasteboard cases and worked embroidery; Mesdames de Genlis and de Flahault wielded their graceful and fertile pens, and composed many delightful works; in short, a crowd of young men engaged themselves as clerks in banking houses. This conduct was rewarded by the admiration it was calculated to excite; efforts like these could not fail to receive the public approbation which became the just reward of such signal acts of perseverance and virtue!

The exiled families were for the most part so fully convinced of the good faith of the powers in alliance with France, and of their intention to coalesce for the purpose of restoring Louis XVI. to the throne, that they left their homes with a very scanty supply of money, expecting on their return to recover their fortunes, their jewels, and their titles. "*By and by* we shall see order restored all over France" was a

common expression amongst them ; and they quitted their country and their families with a confidence which was, however, to be productive of serious evils. This *by and by* was to put an end to all further emigrations, and to heal every wound. Nevertheless, many years elapsed before that wished-for moment ; and many of those families who have returned from their exile are still the victims of misfortune, for their paternal hearth is gone from them ! . . .

We are reluctantly compelled to bring some traits of meanness and bad faith into contrast with this picture of energy, high honour, and Stoic resignation ; happily, however, the latter greatly preponderate, and the pains taken by the emigrants to conceal the errors of their suffering fellow countrymen threw a veil over every discreditable action ; bound by the obligations of mutually defending and assisting each other, a dishonest trait in the character of any one among them appeared improbable, and was buried in oblivion. Nevertheless, the two following anecdotes were the general topics of conversation, because they only reflected disgrace upon a man who had succeeded in saving an immense fortune, and who was pointed at as a model of the most sordid avarice.

So far from endeavouring to relieve the distress of his fellow countrymen, the Marquis d' A—— seemed rather to augment it by lending them small sums of money at an usurious interest, and often obtained

reimbursement in a most unfeeling though perfectly legal manner. No one resorted to him except from sheer necessity, and certainly no debt of gratitude was contracted; a sentiment to which he was no doubt perfectly indifferent.

M. Detchement, a celebrated French dentist, was at this time in very great repute in England, where he obtained sufficient success to have it in his power to lend money to the emigrants without ever accepting any interest for his loans; he was particularly noted for setting porcelain teeth, which were a perfect imitation of real ones, and had none of the disadvantage of false teeth.

A little old man called one day upon him with a dress which denoted the most absolute want; his countenance, moreover, indicated bodily pain and severe distress; this was sufficient to excite the pity of M. Detchement, who asked whether he could be of any assistance to him.

"Oh, sir," replied the visitor, in weak and broken accents, "I am very wretched, and greatly to be pitied."

"Pray, sir, do you stand in need of any assistance? I should be too happy to —"

"By no means; I merely wish for your professional assistance. I have worn for these many years a false set of teeth which is completely destroyed; as I seldom eat any other bread than what the cir-

cumstances of an exile can afford, I have great difficulty in breaking it with these wretched false teeth, and I come to request you will make me a fresh set; you will charge me as low as you possibly can, for I shall be under the necessity of undergoing still greater privations in order to meet this extra expense, which will always be heavier than I can well afford to incur."

During this long and pitiful lamentation, M. Detachment was preparing the requisite apparatus for taking the measure of the mouth which the speaker was holding up to him. On finishing this operation M. Detachment said that he would have the set of teeth in readiness for him in the course of the week for the price of ten guineas.

"What! ten guineas! Where do you suppose, sir, that I can find ten guineas? That sum would support me for the space of two months?"

"I exceedingly regret, sir, that I cannot take a lower price; it is what I charge all emigrants who apply to me, and I can assure you that I ask of them no more than the outlay I have to disburse in preparing the teeth. The oven must be heated three times and oftener, for I have frequently to begin the work over again, before I can succeed to my wish. The English pay me more than double that price; this enables me to charge the French more reasonably."

"I will give you five guineas."

"You mistake me, sir," said M. Detachment, with some warmth, "if you suppose me capable of thus overcharging a person in distress. I flatter myself I do not deserve that you should entertain so unfavourable an opinion of me."

"I beg pardon; will you, then, take six guineas?"

"No, sir, there is no bargaining here; be pleased, therefore, to apply elsewhere."

"Pray be not offended; I will give you the ten guineas," muttered the Marquis, with a sigh, "and shall bring them to you this day week."

He went away, deploring the necessity of incurring so heavy an expense.

Comte de —— met him on the staircase. He owed M. d' A—— a grudge in consequence of having had to allow very high interest for the accommodation he had received from him.

"I pay you my compliments, my dear Detachment," said the Count, as he entered the room; "you have some excellent customers."

"I think so too, indeed; but what can I do? The poor man wants my assistance, and I even regret having just now treated him with some degree of rudeness."

"How so?"

"Why, he put me out of temper by repeatedly bargaining for a set of teeth; I must own I was wrong, and I intend, therefore, to make an abatement when he calls again."

“To whom?”

“To the old man you just met, and whom you are pleased to call my good customer.”

“I am quite in earnest, I assure you; he is worth many thousands. Do you not know him? He is the Marquis d’A——, a miser; a wretch who lends us money for a short time, and at an exorbitant interest.”

“Oh, oh! he has attempted to deceive me; I will pay him off.”

The Marquis d’A—— called on the appointed day; M. Detachment led him to a chair, removed his set of teeth, which he broke and threw into the fire, fixed the new set, which fitted admirably well, and fully answered the expectations of the Marquis, who, with apparent reluctance, pulled ten guineas out of a dirty leathern purse, and carefully counted them over.

“Here, sir,” said he, in a pitiful tone, “is the money I owe you.”

“No, sir, it is only half the sum. Ten guineas was the price which I asked of a *poor Frenchman*, but the Marquis d’A—— must pay for those who cannot afford to do so; I therefore claim twenty guineas of you.”

“Sir, this is an infamous imposition, which —”

“How shall I qualify the imposition you put upon a man who is compelled to earn his livelihood? I advise you for your own sake to pay the twenty

guineas, otherwise I will make known what has taken place between us; the part you have acted cannot redound to your credit."

After heaping every abuse and threat upon M. Detachment, the Marquis submitted to his fate; he could not, besides, act otherwise, since his old set had been thrown into the fire. M. Detachment did not keep the story a secret, and all the emigration laughed at the expense of a man who went amongst them by the name of the *old Jew*.

The Marquise d'A—— died in a town of Germany, the name of which has escaped my recollection. It is the custom of that country to communicate deaths through the means of an undertaker. They go from door to door to make known the occurrence, as well as the hour and place of interment. Anxious to save this trifling expense, M. d'A—— asked his old *valet de chambre*, who was his jack-of-all-trades, whether he understood German.

"Perfectly well, Monsieur le Marquis," replied the valet, delighted to add the duty of interpreter to the many others which devolved upon him.

"I am very glad to hear it; for thou shalt go to announce everywhere the death of the Marchioness, thy late mistress; beware not to forget any one."

"You may depend upon me, M. le Marquis."

The *valet de chambre* dressed himself up in a wretched, threadbare black coat of his master, tore

a piece of black crape from an old dress belonging to Madame's wardrobe, fixed it to his hat, assumed a countenance of sorrow, and knocking at every door, he thrust his head forward, bellowing out these words :

"Yesterday evening, at six o'clock, Madame la Marquise d'A—— *caput*," closed the door, and continued his rounds, always repeating the same phrase. At night, in every private society, the company accosted each other in these terms : "So Madame la Marquise d'A—— is *caput*." *

This specimen of conjugal economy appeared so unworthy and ridiculous that it was made a standing joke against the Marquis d'A—— who was in consequence under the necessity of transferring his economical spirit to another town.

The class of people the most likely to benefit by a Revolution, which was intended to *level* every distinction, and which, nevertheless, was only fertile in *destroying*, exhibited, as well as the privileged class, many acts of sublime virtue ; feeling at a loss which to select, I shall relate a trait that was made known to me on the very spot where the anecdote occurred.

The Marquis de C——, the proprietor of the splendid estate of La Ferté Lowendal, near Orléans, was compelled to emigrate, leaving in his château an

* This word, in Low German, means *broken, destroyed, dashed to pieces*.

old servant, whose long, tried, and faithful services had obtained him the appointment of steward to the estate, of which he performed the duties with the strictest integrity; it gave him a great authority over the servants, and even over the inhabitants of the village, who were wont to respect him and to pay every deference to his wishes.

On the departure of his master he made a strict inventory of everything confided to his charge, carefully concealed every article of value, and affected the most exaggerated democratical opinions.

Keeping company with none but the wildest theorists of the country, assuming a language more violent and outrageous than theirs, adopting their manners, their peculiar expressions and costumes, he succeeded in being nominated by them to a municipal appointment, and nothing thenceforward was ever done without his consent. M. de C—— had deposited in a place of concealment a round sum of money, which was seized by the steward, who, instead of sending it to M. de C—— agreeably to the understanding between them, employed it in buying up the estates of his beloved master.

Becoming possessed of a considerable fortune, he found means of improving the property and of conveying money to M. de C——, who was at a loss to account for the source from whence this assistance was transmitted to him.

As soon as tranquillity was restored, M. de C—— returned to France, and felt indignant on learning that all his estates had fallen into the hands of that steward in whom he had placed the most unbounded confidence; he repaired to the spot without a moment's delay, hoping to recover some fragments of his extensive property, which had been disposed of for a very trifling pecuniary consideration.

He arrived quite unexpectedly, entered the château, and saw before him the old servant, whose snow-white locks and faltering steps excited an emotion in him which he was at first unable to control, as it reminded him of the time that had elapsed since the spot he now visited had been deserted by its lawful owner.

He checked his rising emotion, quickened his pace, and prepared to load with the bitterest reproaches the faithless steward who had plundered him of everything; the old man, startled at the sound of the footsteps, turned round, and on beholding his master fell at his feet exclaiming, with outstretched arms:

“God be praised! I may now die in peace, since I have seen you once more, and can now make restitution of the property I have preserved for you unimpaired.”

These words removed the necessity for any further explanation; the countenance, the look of this model of exemplary gratitude, were sufficient to remove

every doubt from the mind of M. de C——, who pressed to his heart his faithful steward, who from that moment could only appear to him in the character of a generous friend.

He delivered up everything with the most scrupulous minuteness, excepting a *silver fork*, for the loss of which, greatly to his mortification, he was unable to account.

M. de C—— left on his death-bed the bulk of his fortune to his niece, now Comtesse Auguste de Talleyrand, whose truly amiable qualities gave her every claim to his affection. She has disposed of the estate of La Ferté Lowendal to the young Prince of Essling.

I claim the reader's indulgence for quoting two more proofs of the attachment of servants for their masters.

When we returned to France, my father's old *valet de chambre* called to see him, and felt so happy at again beholding his master that he was unable to express his satisfaction in any other language than in broken accents. On quitting my father, he proceeded towards the boulevard, and meeting a friend requested he would procure him a glass of water, as he felt quite suffocated. The blood flew so suddenly to his face that his friend in the utmost alarm inquired what ailed him.

“My master has returned . . . it has so affected

me . . . I feel the shock here," said he, pointing to his heart; and he dropped down dead on the spot.

We heard of this dreadful accident from his widow two days afterwards. She came in the utmost agitation to relate it to my father, who wept bitterly with the poor afflicted woman. Alas! he had no longer anything but tears to offer.

On the day of my wedding (in 1812) we were returning late from a family dinner, and as I wished to avoid any extraordinary expense, which would have been inconsistent with our limited income, *the bride* was on her way home in a humble *fiacre*. My father, however, who must fain communicate his happiness to others, gave the coachman much more than his fare, saying:

"Come, my honest friend, drink to my daughter's health and happiness."

"Oh! M. le Marquis, can it be your voice?" exclaimed the driver, with emotion.

"How dost thou know me, my man? Why give me a title which no longer belongs to me?"

"I will tell you to-morrow."

So saying, he flogged his emaciated horses, and left us in utter astonishment at this meeting. My father had become so obscure a personage that he was at a loss to understand how any one could recollect what he had formerly been.

The next day a message was brought to us that a

respectable old man, in a *fantastical dress*, asked leave to present a nosegay to the young lady who was married on the preceding day.

We were at breakfast, and desired that he should be admitted. He accordingly made his appearance; and I must acknowledge that his proud and contented look made a much slighter impression upon me than his yellow old-fashioned coat, with sky-blue collar and cuffs.

“ Well, M. le Marquis, do you not now recognise your faithful Carpentier, the porter of G—— ? this is the identical, dear livery I was so proud of wearing in your service. I was compelled to remove the trimmings, otherwise those brigands would have taken it from me. In order to make more sure of the livery, I carefully concealed it from every one; something told me that I should again behold my master. *People laugh at me in the streets; but what of that? I carry on my back the badge and patent of my fidelity to him.* Madame,” he continued, turning to me, “ deign to accept this nosegay as a pledge of my affection for your family, and accept at the same time my unfeigned wishes for your welfare. May God reward M. le Marquis for the happiness he has so frequently bestowed on all around him ! ”

I flattered myself that this wish was little short of a *prediction* of what was to happen; I ventured to look forward to future happiness ! . . .

A venerable head and long white hair gave to this old man a peculiar expression which excited our sympathy. My father, in particular, was deeply affected, and was reaping at that moment the reward of a kind disposition which stood the test of every vicissitude of fortune. He pressed his old servant to his heart, made him breakfast with us, and urged him to say in what manner we could be of service to him. The old man's wishes were limited to the obtaining a place in the Hospital of the Incurables.

By dint of exertions my father succeeded in procuring his admission into that hospital, and during many years we regularly heard from him on New Year's Day, being the anniversary of my father's birth, and on the 5th of September, the anniversary of the day of his again beholding his beloved master.

On one of those occasions the usual letter of compliments failed to make its appearance, and we began to apprehend that he was dead. The inquiries we made proved to us how correct we were in supposing that death alone could prevent the customary expression of the worthy man's gratitude. Two years afterwards I lost the parent who had excited this sentiment in his breast, and the tears of a whole village attest that, although bereft of his rank and fortune, my father had still found means of being useful to his fellow creatures!

These traits sufficiently attest that the nobility who

have of late years been so much defamed and calumniated, were kind, affable, and humane towards their inferiors. None but those who possessed all the better qualities of our nature could have inspired so strong an attachment. There would be no difficulty in mentioning many more anecdotes of a similar description. I have exclusively confined myself to those for the accuracy of which I could vouch, and which I felt a delight in publishing to the world, as an homage due to the memory of one whose loss is to me a source of the most bitter regret!

LETTER XV.

MADAME DE BEAUHARNAIS TO HER AUNT,
MADAME FANNY DE BEAUHARNAIS.

“You would hardly believe, dear aunt, that my children have just undergone a long and minute examination! That wicked old man, the member of the Committee whom I have already mentioned to you, called upon me, and affecting to feel uneasy in regard to my husband, and to converse with me respecting him, he opened a conversation with my children. I acknowledge that I at first fell into the snare; what surprised me, however, was the sudden affability of the man; he soon betrayed himself, however, by the malignity and even bitterness which he displayed when the children replied in such a manner as to give him no advantage over their unhappy parents. soon penetrated his artful intentions.

“When he found me on my guard, he threw off the mask, and admitting that he was desired to procure information from my children, which, he said, might be the more relied on as it would bear the stamp of candour, he entered upon a formal examination. At that moment I felt an indescribable emotion, and the

conflicting effects of fear, anger, and indignation alternately at work within me. I was even on the point of openly giving vent to my feelings against the hoary Revolutionist, when I reflected that I might by so doing materially injure M. de Beauharnais, against whom that atrocious villain appears to have vowed perpetual enmity; I accordingly checked my angry passions. He desired me to leave him alone with my children; I attempted to resist; but his ferocious glance compelled me to give way.

“He confined Hortense in a closet, and began to put questions to her brother. My daughter’s turn came next; as for this child, in whom he discovered a premature quickness and a penetration far above her age, he kept questioning her for a great length of time. After having sounded them respecting our common topics of conversation, our opinions, the visits and letters we were in the habit of receiving, but more particularly the occurrences they might have witnessed, he came to the main point—I mean the expressions used by Alexandre. My children gave very proper replies, such in fact as were suited to their respective dispositions, and notwithstanding the artfulness of a mischievous man, whose object is to discover guilt, the frankness of my son and the quick penetration of my daughter disconcerted his low cunning, and even defeated the object he had in view.

“What use is it intended to make of the replies of two children, whose language was that of truth? They can only redound to the triumph of innocence, and the disgrace of my husband’s accusers. Will they have the courage to bring that examination forward if it should be productive of this double check upon their proceedings?

“I can as yet hear nothing concerning poor Nevil. Notwithstanding the reluctance I feel at adopting such a step, I have determined to solicit an audience of a member of the Committee of General Safety, Louis (of the Lower Rhine), who is spoken of in more favourable terms than the rest of his colleagues. Your nephew had expressly forbidden my ever calling upon those men, whom he considers as the destroyers of our country, but he never could mean to forbid my applying in a case in which gratitude and friendship are concerned. Had he done so I could have found it in my heart to disobey him. I hold ingratitude in abhorrence, and shall certainly never add to the number of those who are guilty of that failing.”

LETTER XVI.

MADAME DE BEAUHARNAIS TO HER AUNT.

Louis (of the Lower Rhine). — Insolence of the Man who Is Charged with the Police of the Prisons. — Reflections Concerning Prisons and the Galleys. — M. de Clermont-Tonnerre.

“LOUIS (of the Lower Rhine), whom I have only seen for a moment, had the appearance of being a worthy man, nor do I believe him devoid of feeling; his heart does not seem insensible to the accents of pity; he does not turn a deaf ear to misfortunes, and his temper is unruffled at the reproaches in which the afflicted give vent to their grief; but those very qualities which are his best recommendation with the oppressed are construed into vices, and injure him in the sight of his tyrannical colleagues. He possesses very little influence; and although he listened to my complaint, he was unable to afford any assistance, but took me to the member who was charged with the police of the prisons. The latter, with a look which denoted the cruelty of his heart, assumed a tone of mockery, and paid me an ironical compliment on the interest I felt in Nevil's fate.

“‘Nevil is a handsome young man,’ he added, ‘it is quite natural that he should be patronised by a handsome young woman. If she displays a tender attachment for him, a time may come when he will have it in his power to prove his gratitude. Nevertheless, as his examination is over, his case no longer concerns me. Citizen, you will have to repair to the office of the citizen Prosper Sijas, who will decide whether the permission you solicit can be granted to you. I heartily recommend his acceding to your wishes, for it really is a pity to keep so long asunder two young people who are so anxious to meet.’

“After this insolent language, to which I made no reply, he gave me a ticket for the head of office he had just named. The latter treated me in a very different manner. To my agreeable surprise, I found in M. Sijas all the urbanity that might be expected from a man of the world added to all the minute knowledge of business which might be looked for in a clerk in office. He informed me that, notwithstanding the examination which citizen Nevil had undergone, he was still in the custody of the Committee of General Safety.

“‘As it is imagined,’ said he, ‘that he has something to reveal, it has been thought proper to keep him there, in order that he might be within call. I am sorry for it; in the first place on his own account, as he must feel more than others the consequence of

his detention, and in the next place on your own, madame, since he has had the happiness to excite your sympathy in his favour. Here is the permission to communicate with him; you are to observe that such communications are only allowed in the presence of a third party; but the peculiar cut I have just given to the document conveys the privilege of either rendering the witness invisible, if there exists no special circumstance to oppose his becoming so, or in the event of his refusing to turn his back, of obscuring his sight, and making him hard of hearing.'

"You must own, my dear aunt, that it is impossible for any man to be more amiable than M. Prosper Sijas; he is certainly not at home in that den of thieves, and yet his loss would be greatly felt by those who have to solicit a favour.

"From the office of the Committee I repaired to the Hôtel de Brionne, under the gate of which is established the depot of prisoners. You will hardly credit that they have carried their neglect, I should rather say their atrocious unfeelingness, so far as to select for this depot a low, narrow, and dark room, which barely receives a faint light through a loop-hole, and which, being in the neighbourhood of a main shore, stands lower than the tubes of a pump constantly at work. In this dark, infectious, and damp abode, ten or twelve unhappy prisoners, strangers to each other, are confined in a space fifteen feet

square; their only bed consists of some boards raised thirty inches above the floor, and they are poisoned with the pumping of the mephitic exhalations to which they contribute, whilst their mental afflictions are embittered by the painful communications they impart to each other. In this abode groaned young Nevil, who was brought out to his great surprise, and who recognised me with unfeigned satisfaction.

“It is very true that he has been examined; but the questions related more to what was taking place at the Luxembourg than to what concerned my husband; but as nothing had occurred there it is clear, to whatever lengths the questions were carried, the replies were necessarily short and few in number. He expects to be examined on a fresh topic.”

It is not to be wondered at that men familiar with deeds of cruelty should have so little attended to the comforts of the prisoners whom an atrocious tyranny had confined to loathsome dungeons! It was, moreover, impossible to find suitable prisons, when the numbers of the victims made it indispensable to resort indiscriminately to infectious cellars and splendid hôtels as places of confinement for *suspected* persons; that is to say, for persons doomed to perish; for their fate was determined as soon as they became the inmates of those gloomy abodes. Now, however, that the Government is strong enough to give effect

to the King's wish, that none but those whose guilt is manifest should be punished with all the severity of the laws, the opportunity should not be lost of bestowing more attention than heretofore to the salubrity of our prisons. All participate in the desire that prisoners should be treated with humanity, and yet it escapes the observation of every one that many places of detention in Paris, as well as in the provinces, are still deprived of air, and in a condition which is revolting to the feelings. The bagnios are far more clean and much better ventilated than the prisons reserved for those who have not yet been pronounced guilty of any crime.

Is this what we should expect as the result of the reports daily drawn up on the subject? MM. de Laborde, de Pastoret, etc., are, no doubt, men of the most upright and humane intentions; their recommendations cannot be otherwise than in accordance with the benevolent sentiments they manifest towards their suffering fellow countrymen, it remains to be seen whether their advices are attended to!

I recollect having once called with my mother at the prison of l'Abbaye, to visit some military men of real merit, who had been confined for a slight infringement of the rules of discipline. They were languishing in obscure narrow chambers full of vermin! A very small yard surrounded by high walls scarcely afforded them the means of indulging in

that bodily exercise to which they had all their lives been accustomed.

Might not another place be selected for the punishment of such transgressions, which may be inadvertently committed by men of the highest honour and courage, who are useful to the country, which, whilst it claims their services, is bound to extend its protection to them?

Those who are imprisoned for debt in Sainte-Pelagie, unless they are in *easy* circumstances, are doomed to perish with cold in apartments without fires.* Thus it may happen that the father of a family, after being ruined by the confidence he reposed in a common sharper, may be plunged into distress and exposed to every privation, whilst a man whose guilt is manifest to all may, thanks to his pecuniary means, enjoy

* A friend of mine, Comte de Gr——, having gone, during one of the coldest days of the present winter, to visit a young man confined for debts which he had contracted with usurers who took every advantage of his distress, he found the unhappy man in bed, where he constantly remained in order to avoid being frozen to death in his narrow cell, the door and window of which could never be closed in such a manner as to protect him from the wind. M de Gr—— was informed that the most indispensable articles were sold in the prison at a price four times higher than their real value, and as the prisoner was at a distance from his family, who resided in the country, his means were too scanty to afford him a stock of wood. M. de Gr—— lent him some money, and had the satisfaction, previously to taking leave of his friend, to see a cheerful blaze sparkling in the fireplace of that obscure cell. Ought not the public authorities to give such directions as would prevent the gaolers from earning higher profits than the retail urnishers? Ought they not to forbid a speculation which is the more revolting as it is always carried on at the expense of distressed prisoners?

within the bounds of the same prison all the comforts which the most fastidious could desire !

Might it not be possible to save the prisoners from the infirmities likely to result from a protracted confinement in that prison, by having spacious, well-heated rooms, where those whose only fault is their excessive poverty might escape the consequences of a damp and severe winter ? Can nothing but the possession of a large fortune save one from perishing at Sainte-Pelagie, or becoming, on leaving it, a martyr to the consequences of so rigorous an imprisonment ? Would it not be consistent with justice to fix a tariff for every article sold by the gaoler to the prisoners ? The high price he sets upon whatever he deals out is an abuse which, in my opinion, calls loudly for redress ; it is but fair he should make a profit on what he supplies ; but I ask whether it is proper that such profit should be four times the real value of the article supplied, and that he should deprive the unfortunate of many little comforts which he compels them to relinquish ?

The establishment of a military bagnio has conferred an important service upon humanity ; but is it indispensably necessary that the unhappy men confined in it should be deprived of the wretched mattress formerly granted to them ? * Ought not some distinction

* On his way through Lorient, M. de Clermont-Tonnerre, the then Minister of War, is said to have given orders for burning all the mattresses

to be drawn between soldiers punished for errors frequently committed in a state of drunkenness, and absolute murderers ?

in the bagnio, which had been procured, I believe, by means of a public subscription, for the benefit of the military confined in that prison. The prisoners now sleep upon boards, like the galley-slaves of Brest, Toulon, and Rochefort!

LETTER XVII.

TO THE SAME.

**Visit of M. de Beauharnais's Children to Their Father.—
Their Conversation with Him.**

“MY feelings were yesterday a prey to alternate sensations of pain and pleasure. My husband had expressed a desire to see his children, and, thanks to our guardian angel, his wish was complied with; but in order to spare their youthful feelings I determined to send them at once, and Nevil undertook to usher them in. For some days past they had been told that their father, having fallen ill, had placed himself under the care of a celebrated physician, who, finding the air more pure in the Palace of the Luxembourg, and plenty of vacant space, had taken up his abode in that edifice. The first interview went off very well, if we except the remark made by Hortense, that her papa's apartments were very small, and that the patients were very numerous. When it came to my turn, the children had already left their father, a worthy doorkeeper having, at Nevil's instigation, removed them out of sight, and left them with some neighbours, whose notice they had attracted by their

youth, their position, and their innocent manners. I dreaded their being witnesses to our tender meeting, which took place during their absence. Alexandre, who bears his imprisonment with great fortitude, was not at first proof against my tears. Alarmed, however, at his excessive emotion, I used my endeavours to calm it, and began in my turn to console him. Our children again made their appearance, and this proved a fresh crisis, which was the more painful as we had to disguise from their knowledge the cause of our emotion.

“Hortense, who is all candour, was for a long time the dupe of it, and in the warmth of her affection she wanted to persuade us that we were wrong to give way to sorrow, and that her papa’s illness was not a dangerous one. Hortense had put on that little peevish and negative manner, which, as you know, so well becomes her.

“‘Do you believe that papa is ill?’ said she, to her brother. ‘At any rate, his complaint is not such as doctors can cure.’

“‘What do you mean, my child?’ said I, interrupting her. ‘Do you think that your father and I have connived to deceive you?’

“‘Pardon me, mamma, but I do think so.’

“‘Oh! sister, what you are saying is very odd,’ observed Eugène, with warmth.

“‘It is, on the contrary, quite plain and natural.’

“ ‘What do you mean, mademoiselle?’ I again said, assuming a severe look.

“ ‘Surely,’ continued the arch little girl, ‘affectionate parents may be allowed to deceive their children when they wish to spare their feelings.’

“ So saying, she rushed into my arms and threw her own round her father’s neck. Smiles and tears added to the effect of this family scene, which my Eugène rendered still more affecting by his caresses. Sweet child ! He is as endearing as his sister is witty ; both have hitherto been a source of delight to us ; why are they, in the present crisis, to excite our liveliest anxiety, and to occasion me in particular an indescribable sensation of pain which I am unable to conquer, and find it very difficult to contend with ? I have no apprehension on my own account, but I am in the utmost terror and alarm concerning them and my dearest Alexandre !

“ The occasional visits of my children and the words overheard and picked up by my daughter had enabled her to guess that her father was a prisoner. We acknowledged to her what it was no longer in our power to conceal.

“ ‘What has he done ?’ inquired Hortense.

“ Her brother, laying his usual timidity aside, was also anxious to know the motive of this act of severity. We should have found it very difficult to assign any. Singular abuse of power, guilty and

contemptible stretch of arbitrary authority, which does not escape a child's penetration, which all the world should oppose though no one ever ventures to complain.

"‘Oh! we will punish your accusers,’ exclaimed Hortense, ‘as soon as we are strong enough.’

"‘Be silent, my child,’ said her father; ‘if you are overheard I am lost; you and your mother would be made to suffer for speaking this language, and we might not then enjoy the consolation of having afforded no pretence for their unjust treatment.’

"‘Have you not often told us,’ observed Eugène, ‘that it was proper to resist an act of oppression?’

"‘And I again repeat it,’ rejoined my husband; ‘our conduct must, however, be guided by the rules of prudence, and whosoever attempts to defeat the views of tyranny must beware of awakening it from its slumbers.’

"By degrees the conversation took a more cheerful turn. We forgot our present misfortunes, and indulged in tender recollections and in plans for the future. You will readily suppose that you came in for a share of them.

"‘I wish my aunt every happiness,’ said Alexandre, with a smiling countenance; ‘nevertheless, as the muses are never so interesting as when under the excitement of sorrow, I could wish that for a few days my aunt’s inspiring goddess were familiar-

ised with captivity; it would suggest to her pen a splendid elegy, and the poet's imagination, whilst immortalising her prison, would readily console her for having been one of its inmates.'

"What think you of this wish, my dearest aunt? You will perhaps see in it my husband's anxiety for your welfare; for my part, as I love you more than I do your poetry, I must form a contrary wish, and at the risk of your never sharing the glory of Ovid or of Madame de la Suze, I recommend you to write on in prose, and retain the enjoyment of your liberty in order that you may also indulge in the inclination you have most at heart, that of doing good to your fellow creatures."

LETTER XVIII.

TO CITIZEN DORAT CUBIÈRES.

“To you, my excellent friend, I am bound to give the first account of an occurrence in which you have taken so lively an interest, since I am indebted to your friendly offices for the result I have now to communicate.

“Prosper Sijas, who was appointed five days ago to the rank of Chief Assistant in the War Department, had succeeded in obtaining that my husband should be heard in full committee; he was unwilling, however, that Alexandre’s innocence should derive any advantage from his presence, or create a decisive impression on the members of the Government, who are, for the most part, his old colleagues in office. You, my kind friend, had requested, on the other hand, that I should be examined before the same Committee, and your efforts were attended with success. You must, however, bear in mind that I was ignorant of both those steps on our behalf, and that Alexandre was not aware of their having been contemplated. Removed from the prison of the Carmelites to the office of the Committee, I was waiting

in an anteroom until summoned to appear, when, to my utter astonishment, Alexandre was ushered in; he was no less surprised at seeing me; but we neither of us suspected that there existed the slightest prospect of a mitigation in the severity of our condition. Nevertheless, the happiness of this unexpected meeting procured us some of those moments of unalloyed delight which are calculated to assuage and even to erase a year's sorrows from the memory. We were luxuriating in the enjoyment of each other's company, a pleasure which a Stoic mind might call puerile, when it was interrupted by the very man who had been the unintentional cause of it. This was citizen Sijas, whose new functions have brought about a change in the administration of the Committee, which proved, for a short time, detrimental to our prospects.

“The duty of reporting is no longer confided to Louis; and it would have been unsafe for us to appear before a new reporter who was not perfectly conversant with the facts. This is what the newly appointed Assistant to the Minister of War came to communicate to my husband. I applied the hint to my own case, and resolved not to solicit an audience until a more favourable opportunity should offer. We derived, however, some advantage from the present disappointment, since it was the occasion of our meeting. But in what place and at what moment! I know not what my poor Alexandre may have

thought of me ; for my part, I found him pale, much reduced, and greatly altered for the worst ; but his temper is unchanged ; he is still the most amiable, the most dignified of men ; full of courage and resignation, his language is truly heroic, and his conduct even more magnanimous than his sentiments. He had shed tears of joy on again beholding me ; when it became necessary to part, he evinced the utmost calmness and fortitude. He embraced me rather as a friend than as a husband, and recommended his children to my tender care. So much innocence is in perfect keeping with such extraordinary composure. I cannot but regret, however, that these Committee-men should not have seen him ; they never could have resisted the ascendancy of his lofty virtues."

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LETTER XIX.

TO CITIZEN PROSPER SIJAS.

“I AM informed, citizen, that you are instructed to draw up the report which the representative Louis (of the Lower Rhine) is to make to the Committee of General Safety respecting the case of Général Beauharnais ; Heaven be praised for the change ! Were I acquainted with the individual who has transferred the business to your hands, I should thank him for the act in still warmer language. Had I been allowed to select a judge, your name, citizen, would have instantly occurred to me. It was already familiar to my mind, and had always been coupled with those honourable epithets which the heart alone can suggest ; flattery would seek for them in vain ; they can only be inspired by gratitude, and must therefore be in strict concordance with the truth. Since that time a fortunate chance, or rather a benign Providence, has placed me in a direct intercourse with you which, although it lasted but a moment, was sufficient to satisfy me that those whom you have so kindly protected bore testimony to no more than what you were entitled to at their hands. I am also of the

number of those whose sorrows you have endeavoured to mitigate; and I join my tribute of praise to that of the unfortunate, of whose bitter affliction you would have willingly removed the cause, had it been in your power to do so. You are aware, however, that my sorrows have experienced no diminution, and that so long as my husband's case is not brought before the Tribunal, they acquire additional weight; for he no longer solicits to be set at liberty; he demands to be tried; this is due to a gallant soldier who is accused of a crime which compromises his honour.

“Alexandre de Beauharnais a conspirator! One of the founders of liberty accused of meditating its ruin! He who was chosen among a crowd of other citizens to pave the way for the Republic, arraigned of attempting to compass its downfall! You, citizen, never credited the charge, and those who preferred it were no less convinced of its falsehood. But it behooves us to impress his judges with the conviction of his innocence. Let them but hear your report, and they will readily dismiss the false impression from their minds. It will even be needless to say that his wife, as innocent as he is, pines away at a distance from him; that a prisoner herself, she is not allowed the indulgence of being immured in the prison of her husband. I mention my own case with no other view than to give you the measure of the unjust persecu-

tion hitherto directed against Alexandre. Dismiss from your mind the recollection of the persecuted mother, and of her children wandering at a distance from her; and direct all your thoughts to the father and the husband, or rather to the soldier and the citizen worthy of being restored to honor and liberty."

LETTER XX.

TO HER CHILDREN, EUGÈNE AND HORTENSE.

“Both your notes, although bearing the same date, reached me at the distance of three days from each other. They are everything I could wish, my dearest children, for they express your unaltered affection for me; and had I not received the assurance from your aunt that she had nothing to do with their composition, I should have found in them some indication of the fairy’s wand. At any rate, if she has not dictated the notes, she vouches to me for your uniform good behaviour; in her attentions to you I can discern her genuine kindness of heart and amiable disposition. Your father will be no less delighted than I am at hearing from you. Your duty and fond attachment have suggested the consolations you tender to us at a time when we are persecuted by the wicked. These shall pass away and receive the chastisement of their crimes; you, my dearest children, will be rewarded for your tenderness of heart by promoting your parents’ happiness.

“Repair instantly to the presence of the obliging fairy, and placing yourselves on each side of her, load her with kisses in your father’s name and in mine.”

LETTER XXI.

TO CITIZEN ALEXANDRE DE BEAUHARNAIS.

Tomy's History. — A Book Containing the Gospel Is Pierced Through and Through with Daggers. — Madame de Soyecourt, Abbess of the Carmelite Convent. — Praiseworthy Conduct of M. de Cheverus when Bishop of Montauban. — The Duc de La Force. — Acts of Benevolence Performed by Their Royal Highnesses the Dauphine, Madame, and Mdle. d'Orléans. — The Duc de Doudeauville.

“WE have not forgotten that unhappy barmaid of the neighbourhood of Rouen, who, deserted by her seducer, became insane, and went every day to demand of the travellers on the high road that they would restore to her the wretch who had made so ungrateful a return for her attachment. The worthy Marsollier made us shed bitter tears some years ago when he related the sorrows of the poor and forlorn wanderer; and our amiable Dalayrac has rendered them popular by clothing them in a poetical language which can never grow out of vogue. Well, then, my dear Alexandre, we have a young man in this prison who might excite a still livelier interest than Nina herself, and become the interesting hero of a dramatic production. He is an Englishman known by the name of Tomy.

“One has often to deplore the fatal effects of an ill-fated love, which removes from its victim the very sense of its oppressive grief by depriving him of reason; but the sense of gratitude is seldom so deeply inlaid in our breasts as to be productive of such results. The unfortunate Tomy is an affecting proof of the excess of that attachment which is in every one’s mouth, though felt by very few. This history appears to me so fraught with interest that I cannot resist telling it to you. It will not be lost upon your feelings, and whilst attending for a few moments to the sorrows of others you may be disposed to forget your own. To pity a fellow creature and participate in his sorrows is, alas! the only distraction to which the human heart is accessible in times of bitter trials.

“A worthy curate of Sainte-Sulpice had felt a particular affection for Tomy, and reared him in the principles of a Christian education. I say a Christian education in its most comprehensive meaning, for the worthy Abbé Capdeville, who was as tolerant in his opinions as he was a model of piety himself, had merely brought up this young man as his pupil, and had not even dreamed of making a proselyte of him, persuaded as he was that in a conscience free from guilt religion insinuates itself by the force of good example, and is not to be inculcated by mere precepts. Those which he instilled in Tomy were drawn

from the source of unbounded charity towards all his fellow creatures, a charity of which the curate exhibited in his own person an affecting example.

“A witness to the numerous alms-deeds performed by his tutor with no less benevolence than discrimination, Tomy could not hesitate to believe that true religion had charity for its groundwork; he was no less persuaded that indulgence towards others and a toleration of their errors were precepts emanating from that supreme God whose representative he beheld in the respectable curate. The priest barely reserved for himself what was indispensable for his daily wants. Lavish of his bounty to others, he denied himself many things which might almost be considered as absolutely necessary to him at his advanced age. His composure and placidity of countenance were indicative of the unruffled serenity of his heart. It never seemed obscured by the slightest cloud, except when he found it impossible to relieve a fellow creature or soften the remorse of a guilty conscience.

“Gifted with quick penetration and a tender heart, Tomy felt towards his Benefactor an attachment the more sincere as he had hitherto been a stranger to every affection! He had lost his mother ere he could have known her, and he was only eight years of age when Providence threw this protecting angel in his way; a deserted orphan, he had received from M.

Capdeville the protection of a home and a parental education; he felt so much delight in obeying him that he succeeded in whatever he undertook; it was sufficient that *his father* (the name by which he called the abbé) should give him an advice, he managed by the most persevering application to overcome in a short time the most serious difficulties. This amiable and worthy young man possessed a remarkable talent for music. His melodious though feeble voice adapted itself to many instruments, and his daily progress on the harp offered a presage that he would soon instruct others in a science in which he was becoming so great a proficient.

“M. Capdeville, being a man of much information, undertook to give instruction to the children of several artists, who delighted in testifying their gratitude by teaching in return their friend’s pupil; thus it happened that without laying out upon him what he did not conceive himself at liberty to withdraw from the poor, this worthy clergyman found means of providing his dear Tomy with the most celebrated masters; and a man who was so modest in whatever was personal to himself, felt proud of the success of his adopted child. But the happiness he experienced was destined, alas! to be of short duration.

“One of the consequences of the fatal 10th of August was the incarceration of almost every priest who had not taken the oath to the Constitution.

Abbé Capdeville, from an intimate conviction that the clergy should obey the temporal power according to the precepts of the Gospel, had taken the required oath, and submitted, if not cheerfully, at least as a point of duty, to the existing authority. He had therefore nothing to apprehend on that score. Being, however, the diocesan of the venerable Archbishop of Arles, who was at all times his protector, he could not take upon himself to desert his patron in so pressing a danger. In consequence of this display of attachment, the Revolutionists of the section, who had either seen or were determined to see in it a proof of complicity, had decreed his imprisonment in the Carmelite Convent, where a few days afterwards Tomy had, by dint of exertions, obtained leave to remain with him, at a time when a single word, a look, were sufficient to consign any one to a dungeon ; the poor youth was denied the favour he so warmly solicited, of tending in his turn the old man who had protected him from his earliest infancy.

“Hard-hearted men refused him for a time what they considered as *a favour*, because it fell short of an act of cruelty. One of the members of the Committee, being under some obligations to M. Capdeville, succeeded at last in obtaining for Tomy the object of his solicitations ; he was confined with his benefactor.

“I must spare my friend the recital of the horrid massacre committed on the 2nd of September in that

prison, which will be forever memorable from the sublime resignation displayed by the numerous victims put to death. The chapel in particular was selected by the executioners as the most appropriate place for slaughtering the clergy.* They appeared to be drawn, as it were, to that spot in order, no doubt, that the expiring looks of the dying might be directed towards their crucified Saviour, who, persecuted like them, had set them the example of forgiving their enemies; and the last sighs of these unfortunate men might almost be considered as hymns of glory; they were praying for their assassins when the horde of frenzied wretches burst in upon them.

“The Archbishop of Arles, who was seated in an armchair in consequence of his advanced age, was giving his last blessing to his companions kneeling before him. Capdeville, on bended knees, recited in a calm and clear tone of voice the prayers of persons in their last agony, which were answered from the interior of the sacred edifice by the choir of martyrs, and from without by the vociferations and hootings

* Large spots of blood may yet be seen impregnated in the stone floor of the chapel of the Carmelite Convent. One of those clergymen, who was an honour to the priesthood, had in his side-pocket a small book containing the gospel, which had the effect of protecting his life for a few moments; at last, however, the assassins despatched a victim whom Providence seemed anxious to save from their blows. This book received twenty-two stabs from daggers, and was covered with blood. It is now the property of Madame de Soyecourt, the respectable abbess of that convent.

of a troop of wild miscreants eager to imbrue their hands in blood.

“Tomy flew about the house in the utmost agitation, stopping to listen, and alternately bursting into tears and uttering the most mournful lamentations. Some neighbours, attracted to the spot by a courageous sense of compassion, used every endeavour to save him and to promote his escape, but he no sooner beheld his master, or rather his friend, than he felt himself riveted to the spot and obstinately refused to be separated from him. The ferocious monsters, having broken open the doors and forced in the windows, penetrated into several parts of the building, and the pavement of the chapel, as well as the steps leading to the sanctuary, were soon covered with blood.

“Capdeville received the fatal blow immediately after his Archbishop; he fell at his feet, and, stretching his half-fractured hand towards Tomy, fixed a last look upon him, and expired. That look was a parting benediction

“Already this young man, or rather this boy — for he was not yet sixteen years of age — had exhibited evident symptoms of mental aberration; but his malady appeared to reach its height when his friend fell to the ground. The unfortunate Capdeville was apart from his companions in martyrdom; his head rested on the step nearest the altar, and his body on the lower ones; his left hand pointed to his heart, and

his right towards his pupil, as already mentioned. The blow under which he expired had not effaced the habitual expression of kindness depicted on his placid physiognomy, so that, owing to his sudden alienation of mind, Tomy felt impressed with the conviction that his friend had merely fallen asleep. Immediately, as if by sudden enchantment, all this scene of slaughter disappeared from his bewildered sight; he knelt down near the bleeding corpse, and awaited its arising from its fancied slumbers. After remaining for three hours in this position, Tomy ran for his harp, took his station near the mangled remains of his friend, and struck up some plaintive tunes in order to accelerate his awakening, which appeared to him delayed beyond a reasonable time. At last he was overtaken by sleep, and the charitable hands which had removed the bodies of the martyrs from the grasp of their assassins extended the same office to Tomy, and bore him to his bed. He remained during forty-eight hours in a lethargic sleep, out of which he awoke with all the appearance of health and of sound mind; but if he retained the full enjoyment of the former, the latter was never restored to him.

“Out of commiseration for a state of insanity which arose from so virtuous a cause, he was allowed the free range of this house, where he remains in contemplative silence until the daily return of the evening hour of three. The clock has no sooner

tolled that hour than Tomy, who generally paces the prison with slow and measured steps, suddenly runs for his harp, and leaning against the fragments of the altar strikes up the tunes which his friend delighted to hear. His countenance indicates hope; his attitude denotes that he is awaiting a word from the friend who is ever present to his mind; and his hope does not vanish until the hour of six, when he abruptly closes the melancholy scene with these words:

“ ‘ *Well, then, not yet; but he will soon speak to his child.*’

“ He kneels down, prays with the utmost fervour, utters a sigh on rising from the ground, walks away on tiptoes for fear of awaking his friend, and falls into a complete mental absorption until the next day.

“ Although a prisoner in this house, I had not yet had an opportunity of seeing the young man until this moment, when I have just had for the first time a glimpse of his countenance, which reflects his deep-felt sorrow and exalted virtues. I should to-day find it impossible to dwell upon any other topic. Farewell, then, my friend, *until to-morrow*; more fortunate, however, than Tomy, I have the certainty of being enabled to repeat to the object of my dearest affection and solicitude the sentiments I entertain for him.”

It would be difficult to find a clergyman more

perfect than M. Capdeville appears to us, according to Josephine's description of him. Many others afforded a signal proof of virtue during the period of the Revolution, when they repeatedly exposed themselves to death, not only to save the lives of their fellow creatures, but in endeavouring to provide them with the consolations of religion, and in exercising their holy avocations, notwithstanding the numberless dangers which stood in the way of their attending to the duties of their ministry.

In our own days several members of the clergy are entitled to the public admiration which they strive to elude by concealing the most honourable acts. We might quote a multitude of traits which would effectually destroy the calumnies so unceasingly levelled at men in holy orders. Suffice it for the purpose we have in view, that we furnish some details concerning M. de Cheverus, Archbishop of Bordeaux, in order to prove that acts of the most sublime virtue are the inspirations of true piety!

Having been appointed Bishop of Montauban, M. de Cheverus won the affection of Catholics and Protestants in a town in which the latter formed a very numerous body. When it was a question of consoling the afflicted, he forgot all differences of religion, and succeeded in mitigating the sorrows of his fellow creatures without even uttering a word which might lead to the inference that, as a reward for his kind

offices, he had the least idea of urging them to change their creed. This truly apostolic man was wont to offer up fervent prayers for the conversion of heretics ; but he was satisfied with awaiting that event without accelerating it by any measure of intolerance, his own example was best calculated to prove on which side the truth was to be found.

Being informed that the mayor of M——, a small town in the neighbourhood of Montauban, had been for the last fifteen years on bad terms with the curate, M. de Cheverus paid a visit to the former without giving him any previous notice of his intention. He was recognised by the poor, who were receiving daily proofs of the charitable feelings of their Bishop, and had often been admitted into his presence ; they collected in crowds round the mayor's residence, and rent the air with acclamations.

The mayor hastened to greet the prelate, who rushed into his arms and said to him :

“ If it be true that I have rendered some slight assistance to the people over whom you preside, reward me by becoming reconciled to the curate. I have no desire to know which of you is in the wrong ; your misunderstanding affects the welfare of the inhabitants of this district, and creates a kind of schism which I grievously deplore. Give me a proof of your regard for me by exchanging with him the kiss of peace I now tender to you.”

The venerable countenance of the Bishop, his language of supplication, created so deep an impression on the person whom he addressed, that, without answering a word, he tore himself from M. de Cheverus, hurried away to the curate, frankly acknowledged his error, requested he would forget what had taken place, and consent to take part in the humble fare he had just offered to their Bishop; from that moment these two men live on terms of the most friendly understanding, the beneficial effects of which have already been generally felt.

A dreadful inundation which desolated a part of France principally extended its ravages over the department of which Montauban is the chief town. The Tarn had completely overflowed its banks, and spread itself over many villages, tan-yards, and mills. The shrieks of the unfortunate victims of the inundation excited the deep sympathy of the whole population; but the danger of conveying relief to many huts, which were built upon small islands in front of the town, prevented any one from running the risk of so perilous an undertaking.

M. de Cheverus had repaired to the scene of this awful calamity. He assisted in throwing out ropes, and drawing up the unfortunate people who clung to them; he recalled their suspended animation by the application of salts, and advised what could best be done for them; but his heart was penetrated

with the deepest affliction when he found that no one would venture to approach the habitations surrounded and nearly covered with water. He offered large sums of money as an inducement for the boatmen to fly to the relief of those despairing families, which were threatened at every moment with the danger of being carried away and plunged into the abyss; none would venture into a boat, from a conviction that it would be instantly upset.

“Well, then,” exclaimed M. de Cheverus, “Providence plainly reserves to myself the consolation of saving my children.”

Notwithstanding the efforts and entreaties of the bystanders, the holy Bishop threw himself into a boat, accompanied by the Duc de la Force, who had for many hours been bestowing the most effectual assistance; several men, spurred on by such examples of courage, determined to brave a death, at the aspect of which they had shrunk a few moments before; to share the glory of such self-devotedness was now the wish of every one, and the Bishop found himself compelled to decline the services of many. Endeavours were still exerted to dissuade him from his enterprise; but he persisted, seized one of the oars, plied it with all the vigour of his youthful days, and the boats rapidly flew from the bank, leaving behind a crowd of people, who, on bended knees, offered up the most fervent prayers for the safety

of one who appeared in their eyes as the messenger of Providence.

After the most incredible efforts and dangers, which would appear exaggerated were I to detail them, hundreds of individuals were saved who had given up all prospect of escaping. They were no sooner landed than M. de Cheverus addressed them as follows :

“Happy am I, my dear children, to find myself thus surrounded at this moment. My only regret is that I should not have it in my power to repair your losses, but the King is all goodness ; he will do what it is out of my power to accomplish. Meanwhile, until his bounty shall have reached you, come to the episcopal residence, where you shall receive shelter and nourishment. Your more fortunate fellow townsmen will come to your assistance ; follow me.”

During several weeks the Bishop's palace afforded shelter to this distressed population. In order to support these poor people, M. de Cheverus deprived himself of every superfluous comfort, and shared their daily meal. He collected numerous alms, and his appeals were the means of affording considerable relief to the objects of his solicitude. The Duc de la Force wrote to the King, who sent 6,000 francs, and further sums at a later period, which put an end to the most dreadful wretchedness and misery.

M. de Cheverus was afterwards appointed to the Archbishopric of Bordeaux, which he at first declined, owing to the reluctance he felt at quitting Montauban. Nothing could be more natural than his attachment to a town in which he had conferred so much happiness! But the King having written to him, and signified his commands that he should go to Bordeaux, where he would have a wider field and ampler means for doing good, M. de Cheverus gave way. The greatest regret was felt at his departure. His conduct at Bordeaux is but a continuation of those acts of benevolence which he had previously displayed at Montauban. What better eulogium can be passed upon it! *

The dreadful inundation just mentioned also extended its ravages to the Department of the Loiret. Windmills were swept away; a hundred boats, heavily laden, broke their cables at the town of Orléans, and in their rapid course down the stream destroyed several houses, and occasioned the death of a great number of their inhabitants.

* Having been lately summoned as a witness by the Court of Assize, held at Saint Omer, in the Department of the Pas-de-Calais, M. de Cheverus repaired to that town; and in his reply to a question put to him, which has been quoted in all the papers, affords so correct an estimate of his dignified character that I feel it my duty to record it in this place. "The accused having caused a variety of questions to be put to the Archbishop by the organ of the President of the Court: 'Monseigneur,' said the latter, 'the accused calls for an answer to all these questions. I am therefore bound to put them to you.' 'M. le Président,' replied the Archbishop, 'it is my duty to answer them. In the far too elevated condition in which I am placed, I owe the example of deference to the law.'"—*Journal des Débats*, 26th February, 1829.

I was then residing at Meung, a small town on the banks of the Loire, and shall never forget the scene of desolation on the quay, where all the houses were filled with water. Women and children were seen on the roofs imploring a relief which it was dangerous to convey to them, as, owing to the rapid current of the Loire, any boat that ventured out was in danger of being upset. Several inhabitants devoted themselves to danger on the occasion, and carried provisions to the unfortunate sufferers by the inundation, who must have died of want had it not been for the courage of these gallant men. The most dreadful wretchedness was the deplorable consequence of that calamity.

The idea occurred to me of writing to the Princesses, who never turned a deaf ear to distress, and I was fortunate enough to receive from them a sum of money which allayed much of the prevailing misery. When an obscure individual like myself could receive assistance for these people at a moment when applications were pouring upon Their Royal Highnesses from all parts of France, some idea may be formed of the extent of their generous disposition. I doubt that any relief was ever more needed, or was ever received with more lively gratitude.

Encouraged by this success, I solicited assistance from the same humane quarter on another occasion, and had reason to congratulate myself for not having

dreaded to become importunate when my applications to the Dauphine, the Duchesse de Berry, and Mdle. d'Orléans, had the afflicted for their object.

The Duc de Doudeauville, at that time Minister of the King's Household, sent me 200 francs which were applied for, at my request, by his nephew, M. Anatole de Montesquion. These joint sums afforded the means of rebuilding the cottage of two interesting female orphans which had been completely destroyed by fire.

The workmen I engaged for rebuilding the cottage refused to be paid the price of their hire; so noble a trait ought to be recorded in the memoirs of a woman.

Having already adverted to the Duc de la Force, I must not conclude this chapter without furnishing some details respecting his praiseworthy conduct during our political troubles.

Flattering himself that he might be allowed access to his august godfather (Louis XVIII.), and risk his life in that Prince's service, he emigrated. After having fought in the army of De Condé with the utmost gallantry, he returned to France in the year 1800, and led a retired life until 1809, at which period he was appointed a deputy from the Department of the Tarn and Garonne. He reëntered the service with a view to share the dangers and glory of the campaigns about to be undertaken, distinguished

himself at the battles of Essling, Wagram and the Moskwa, was wounded in the latter engagement, had two horses killed under him, and obtained the cross of an officer of the Legion of Honour.

The Emperor named the Duc de la Force one of the officers of the sacred battalion on the fatal retreat from Moscow. Idolising his country, he was anxious to serve it, not in the antechamber of a palace, but on the field of battle. This noble ambition found its reward in the esteem and attachment of the whole army.

Appointed Inspector-General of Cavalry at the Restoration, he joined the Duc d'Angoulême at Nîmes during the hundred days. The civil and military command of several departments having been assigned to him, he received advices intimating that the public mind was in a state of excitement at the town of Cahors, where the people had determined to shake off the King's authority; he repaired to the spot with no other attendant than his secretary, and displayed the white cockade in his hat, though well aware that the tri-coloured flag had been unfurled during the night on every public building of the town. On his arrival at the Prefecture he was arrested and hurried away to the barracks. Every bayonet was pointed at his breast, to which all his decorations were suspended. Threats were thrown out to him by some young soldiers who, joining in

the clamour of a licentious mob, sought to elicit from him the exclamation of "*Long live the Emperor.*"

His coolness rescued him from his imminent danger, without any sacrifice of the oath he had taken to his King. He exclaimed in a firm tone of voice, but with perfect composure :

"When you will have uttered that exclamation as I have done, whilst covered with wounds on the field of battle, you will then have a right to dictate laws to me. Till then, *conscripts*, hold your tongues, and abstain from cowardly assassinating an officer who had fought the battles of France before you were born."

He had no sooner spoken than the bayonets were raised, and the crowd made way for him ; but a kind of council of war was assembled, and within two hours from that time the Duc de la Force was proceeding on the road to Paris, escorted from brigade to brigade by an officer of gendarmerie, a quartermaster, and four gendarmes. Maréchal Davoust, then Minister of War, deprived him of his liberty, which he only received at the second Restoration.

He has always distinguished himself in the Chamber of Peers by sound and moderate opinions. Appointed in 1820 to the command of the Department of the Tarn and Garonne, he won the esteem of every one by the kindness of his disposition, his uniform impartiality, constant acts of benevolence, and

at the time of the inundation to which I have adverted, by an act of self-devotedness which can never be sufficiently appreciated. In short, the Duc de la Force has succeeded in preserving unsullied a name as honourable as it is celebrated in our annals, which his personal renown might have illustrated for the first time if his ancestors had not spared him the necessity of any exertion beyond that of perpetuating its splendour.

LETTER XXII.

M. DE BEAUHARNAIS TO HIS WIFE.

“YOUR account of young Tomy is as affecting, my dearest friend, as its hero is an object of deep interest. After privately and repeatedly reading your letter, I have communicated its contents to our circle of society; and all have joined me in bestowing a just meed of praise on that victim of the noblest sentiment of our nature; in other words, all have shed tears at the recital; all France would do the same if his history were made public; how much it is entitled to this distinction! what a contrast to the crimes of the present day! but with the greatest atrocities are found to spring up the most exalted virtues; the example afforded by Tomy’s conduct should not be lost to the world. We have talents in this place which will delight in perpetuating his fame; one individual amongst us is preparing to draw a portrait of him; another will compose verses to his praise, and this trifling monument which is unpretendingly offered to a public naturally well-disposed may, perhaps, lay the foundation of the orphan’s future comforts.

“Happy should I be, for my part, if by contributing my mite I could bind him to my son’s fortunes! Eugène carries in his heart the germ of every virtue; how much it would improve by setting the example constantly before him of one whose attachment and gratitude exceeded all bounds! Pray cherish this idea, dearest Josephine; it will perfectly harmonise with your benevolent disposition; and if it should ever be realised, the most bitter moment of our life will have enabled us to treasure up the most extraordinary monument and the most affecting recollection.

“The oppression which I felt is daily wearing away; it was only a heavy cold on my chest, occasioned by the state of irritation which is inseparable from my present situation. The doctor’s appearance dispels my complaint, and when I read my dear Josephine’s letters I fancy myself recovered and almost happy! . . . Whenever we are again reunited, happiness will no longer be a mere illusion; I am sure you will be disposed to join in giving reality to this sentiment.”

LETTER XXIII.

TO HORTENSE DE BEAUHARNAIS.

“THE excellent heart displayed by my Hortense would claim from me every praise were I not displeased at her self-will. Is it possible, my child, that you have come to Paris without my aunt’s permission! worse than that, you have done so in opposition to her wish! this is extremely wrong. You will no doubt urge as a reason that you were desirous of seeing me; but you must be aware that I am not allowed to be visited, except by express permission; this can only be obtained after some delay, and by means of constant applications which my poor Victorine must be heartily tired of making. I find, moreover, that you placed yourself in M. Darcet’s chaise, without considering whether you might not subject him to inconvenience, and delay the transport of his goods; all this shews a great want of sense. My dear child, it is not enough to do good; it should, moreover, be well done, and at your age the first of virtues is a confidence in and docility towards one’s parents. I am therefore under the necessity of tell-

ing you that I prefer the quiet attachment of your brother to your misplaced anxiety on my account. Nevertheless I embrace you, though with less tenderness, methinks, than I shall feel disposed to do when I learn your return to Fontainebleau."

LETTER XXIV.

MADAME DE BEAUHARNAIS TO HER HUSBAND.

Hopes Nourished by the Prisoners. — Madame de Can—— at the Salpêtrière. — She Loses Her Senses. — The Duchesse de M—— and M. de B—— Become Insane in the Year 1815. — Madame de C——. — M. (George) Ons——.

“I ANSWER for it, my dear Alexandre, you will now be disposed to read my almanacs! The third and fourth numbers of the *Vieux Cordelier* have already created some impression upon your mind; but what will you say to the present number? I hasten to send it to you; all are eager after it; the leaves are torn asunder to be read by many at one and the same time; it brings tears to the eyes of every one; the prisoners embrace each other after reading it; many of them have already ordered rejoicings, country excursions, and new furniture. Yesterday, Madame de S—— sent for a horse-dealer and came to an understanding with him for the renewal of her stud. On the other hand, the old Du Merbion, with whom you recollect having enjoyed some field sports at the Raincy, has ordered from Scotland six pairs of the finest ferrets that can be obtained. In short, all

kinds of tradespeople are engaged for a month ; and when we leave this, I doubt whether we shall find a morsel of bread on sale. Nevil's mother shares our hopes and satisfaction ; as for you, my dear Alexandre, I trust you will not destroy them by cruel anticipations, by unfounded mistrust, or the dark forebodings suggested by too long an experience, by the recollection of your sorrowing family and the sight of your prison bars.

“ Adieu, for the present, my dearest friend ; I do not send you to-day an embrace imprinted on a cold piece of paper, as I reserve to myself the pleasure of shortly lavishing them in reality.

“ P. S. — I am writing to acquaint my aunt with the joyful tidings ; I shall also write to my children, and announce to my Eugène a companion worthy of him. Tomy consents to remain with us, but under the express condition that on the 2d of every month, at the hour of three in the afternoon, he may come to charm with the chords of his harp the dreams of his *slumbering friend as long as the Revolution lasts !* Poor Tomy ! who would not be affected at so touching an insanity ? ”

The Revolution assumed a turn very different from that which Madame de Beauharnais anticipated ; the events consequent upon the Reign of Terror having deprived the nobility of every resource, it is probable

that Madame de Beauharnais's benevolent plan of taking the unfortunate Tomy under her care was never realised ; at least I have never heard her make the slightest allusion to this young man, whose alienation of mind will no doubt have shortened his existence, after he had been left wholly to his own resources and found himself bereft of a protector and of every consolation !

In those disastrous times many persons were attacked with that cruel complaint to which death is comparatively preferable. The pious and kind Madame de C—— was confined in the Salpêtrière. She was so dreadfully affected at being separated from her husband who had just emigrated, and from her two sons who were still in their tenderest infancy, that she lost her senses. I have often seen her since ; she had frequent attacks of folly, during the prevalence of which her conversation was exclusively turned to the subject of the unfortunate prisoners she was desirous of relieving. Her noble mind displayed itself in all its excellence during those cruel moments ; she appeared completely to forget that she had been a victim to the very sufferings she was so bent upon mitigating in others. She never spoke of self, but was wholly engaged with the concerns of her fellow sufferers. To these fits succeeded a deep melancholy, but her gentleness remained unimpaired. I have learnt with unfeigned pleasure that this excellent

lady, with whom I am connected by ties of relationship, has since completely recovered health, thanks to her husband's unremitting attentions. Her restoration to her senses must redound to the advantage of the poor, who will no longer experience any interruption in the bounties she so much delighted to lavish upon them.

In 1815, the charming Duchesse de M——, who was remarked as a model of grace, wit, and elegance, lost her senses when she became acquainted with the landing of Napoleon, supposing that he intended to persecute her mother, for whom she felt the most tender attachment, and who was most ardent in the expression of her Royalist sentiments.

M. de B——, a young Corsican officer of great promise, was indebted to the Emperor for his success in the service. He was so much affected at not being allowed to accompany him to St. Helena, as he had earnestly solicited, that he became mad. He died shortly afterwards at Charenton, to the inexpressible regret of all his friends.

When I was first introduced into the world, a young lady of great personal and mental accomplishments was compelled by her parents to renounce all idea of a marriage which they had previously determined upon, and which perfectly coincided with her inclinations, and to contract another with a man of sterling merit, no doubt, though not the object of her choice.

Shortly after its celebration M. de C—— became blind, and his wife, in the height of her grief at this misfortune, lost her senses, which she has never since recovered, notwithstanding the skill of our most eminent physicians and the attentions of her family, who repented too late their having changed their original intentions on her behalf.

The despair of this young lady will be readily accounted for when it is known that M. George Ons——, a man highly spoken of for his talents, his amiable disposition, and handsome looks, was the object of this unhappy passion, although, according to report, he did not return it by a kindred attachment. M. Ons—— has since married Mdlle. de Font——, a lady of great personal attractions.

The number of persons labouring under mental derangement is said to be much greater than before the Revolution. This is not surprising when we consider how many events, accumulated within the space of a few years, have overturned private fortunes and wounded the dearest affections! If to these causes we add the fatigues of a state of warfare and the wounds received in the head, we may perhaps wonder that those fatal accidents have not been of more frequent occurrence.

LETTER XXV.

TO MADAME FANNY DE BEAUHARNAIS.

“YESTERDAY was, comparatively speaking, a day of happiness for me, my dearest aunt, since it brought me a letter from you. Well, then, the night which followed it was happier still ; and although this happiness was not altogether unalloyed, no circumstance has occurred since my husband’s death which has contributed so much to renew my attachment to life. Yes, I must live to cherish his memory, to educate my children, to enjoy the uninterrupted society of my excellent aunt, and partly to mix with our friends. For these few hours past my faculties are undergoing a gentle revolution ; I have now to tell you the cause of it.

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“I had hitherto been familiar with the humiliation of misfortune, the bitterness of grief ; I begin to feel that neither grief nor misfortune are wholly without their attraction, and that when we add to the balm which time conveys to our minds the delight of cherishing the memory of an adored object, the soul may expand in such an enjoyment. To Nevil’s re-

cent visit I am indebted for taking this view of my condition.

“You have not forgotten the name, the services, the gentle and honest countenance, of that worthy young man. Last night, just as I was about to retire to rest, after indulging in my son’s endearing caresses, Nevil sent up his name; he has, and ought to have, at all hours, immediate access to me. His appearance, however, greatly surprised me; you know him to be grave and solemn in his deportment, he was still more so on the present occasion.

“‘This day, madame,’ said he, ‘can never be erased from your recollection; to me it will be no less hallowed. On this day was assassinated an upright man, but that man has left traces behind him, and confided their safe delivery to my care. This is what he wrote to you a few hours previously to sealing with his blood the most sacred of causes; this is what he confided to my mother with injunctions that she should consign it into my hands; that is what it behooved me to give up to you without delay.’

“Whilst uttering these words, Nevil presented a letter to me; it was *Alexandre’s* handwriting! A shivering paleness came upon me, I trembled with agitation, and my tears flowed in copious abundance when I found under the cover a lock of my husband’s hair. *Eugène* kneeling by my side loaded with kisses and watered with his tears those precious tokens of

his departed father. After allowing me to indulge for a few minutes in the most heartrending and yet most delightful emotion, Nevil took upon himself to prolong its duration by reading in a calm and composed tone the letter confided to his charge, which runs as follows :

LETTER XXVI.

LAST LETTER FROM M. DE BEAUHARNAIS TO HIS WIFE.

We Return to France Some Days Before the 18th Fructidor.

— Our Alarm. — Banishment of MM. de Lacretelle, de
Barbé-Marbois and de Barthélemy.

“ CONCIERGERIE,
“ Night of the 7th Thermidor, Year 2. }

“ I HAVE yet a few minutes to devote to affection, tears and regret; and then I must wholly give myself up to the glory of my fate and to thoughts of immortality. When you receive this letter, my dear Josephine, your husband will have ceased to live, and will be tasting true existence in the bosom of his Creator. Do not weep for him; the wicked and senseless beings who survive him are more worthy of your tears, for they are doing mischief which they can never repair. But let us not crowd the present moments by any thoughts of their guilt, I wish, on the contrary, to brighten them by the reflection that I have enjoyed the affections of a lovely woman, and that our union would have been an uninterrupted course of happiness, but for errors which I was too late to acknowledge and atone for. This thought wrings tears from

my eyes, though your generous heart pardons me. But this is no time to revive the recollection of my errors and your wrongs. What thanks I owe to Providence, who will reward you!

“That Providence now disposes of me before my time. This is another blessing for which I am grateful. Can a virtuous man live happy when he sees the whole world a prey to the wicked? I should rejoice in being taken away, were it not for the thought of leaving those I love behind me. But if the thoughts of the dying are presentiments, something in my heart tells me that these horrible butcheries are drawing to a close; that executioners will in their turn become victims; that the arts and sciences will again flourish in France; that wise and moderate laws will take the place of cruel sacrifices; and that you will at length enjoy the happiness which you have always deserved. Our children will discharge the debt for their father . . .

“I resume these incoherent and almost illegible lines, which were interrupted by the entrance of my jailors.

“I have just submitted to a cruel ceremony, which, under any other circumstances, I would have resisted, at the sacrifice of my life. Yet why should we rebel against necessity? reason tells us to make the best of it we can. My hair has been cut off. I had some idea of buying a part of it in order to leave to my

wife and children an unequivocal pledge of my last recollection of them. Alas! my heart breaks at the very thought, and my tears bedew the paper on which I am writing. Adieu, all that I love! Think of me, and do not forget that to die the victim of tyrants and the martyr of liberty sheds lustre on the scaffold."

M. de Beauharnais foresaw the happy Revolution of the 9th Thermidor, which restored to liberty a multitude of interesting victims, and put a period to the sanguinary executions which desolated the country. France was released from the tyrannical yoke which had so long oppressed her.

However, the reign of persecution was not entirely at an end. I recollect that in 1797 my parents, like many other emigrants, determined to take advantage of the interval of repose, and return home to see their families and friends.

For a very trifling sum my father procured a passport under a fictitious name, and set out from Hamburg with me, my mother, and a little girl, an infant, eighteen months old, whom we undertook to convey to her uncle, her only remaining relative, the rest of the family having died in emigration. My father took the name of M. von Rozen, and described himself as a merchant of Valengin, in Switzerland.

At every fortified town in Germany our passports

were demanded, and as neither my father nor my mother understood German, I was obliged to act as interpreter. This gave me an air of importance which was, of course, calculated to please a child. But my learning was sometimes a source of annoyance to me, for whenever we approached a drawbridge I was roused out of a sound sleep to answer the questions of the sentinels. My first exclamation on opening my eyes was "*Herr von Rozen, kauffman ;*" * and such is the effect of habit that long after that period I used to utter the same words whenever I awoke.

I recollect an honest old invalid, whose business it was to examine our passports at the last German town on the frontier, said to me with a smile :

" My little miss, Valengin seems to be a large city, and a place of extensive trade."

" Yes, monsieur."

" Why, it must be the capital of the world, for I am sure that no less than twenty thousand merchants from that place have passed this way !"

I did not know much about Switzerland, and these remarks occasioned me a degree of embarrassment, which must have been visibly marked on my countenance. On one occasion, when I had gone through my regular lesson, a question was asked to which I knew not what answer to give. My father and mother observed my confusion, and, finding that my parley

* M. de Rozen, merchant.

with the sentinel was continued longer than usual, they began to fear all was not right. The old soldier, however, soon removed their alarm by advising them, in a friendly tone, to quit the *mercantile profession* on reaching Paris, where they might find people more rigid than he.

"We Germans," said he, "are very good fellows, but the French!"

He accompanied this remark by such a droll grimace that I found it impossible to repress a burst of laughter, in which I was joined by my father and mother, and in this manner we entered France. Our merriment seemed a presage of good fortune, and my parents ventured once again to indulge hopes which they had long since relinquished. Alas! these happy anticipations were but of short duration.

On our arrival in Paris we alighted at the "Hôtel de l'Infantado," now the residence of Prince de Talleyrand. We engaged very pleasant apartments, the windows of which looked partly into the Rue Saint Florentin and partly into the Place Louis XV., the hôtel being a corner house. I was quite dazzled by the mirrors and the gilding that decorated the drawing-room, for I had never been accustomed to so elegant a residence. It was ten o'clock at night, and the moon shone magnificently. My mother, who was going about giving directions to the servants, happened to turn her eyes towards one of the windows,

which looked to the Place Louis XV., in the centre of which stood a colossal statue of Liberty. She immediately burst into tears. I ran to her, and, throwing myself into her arms, said :

“What is the matter, mother? Why do you weep when we are in this fine room? Papa has just gone to order supper. Look at these beautiful houses; they are larger than any in Altona. I do not know why you grieve, mamma, but for my part I am quite happy.”

“Oh, my child,” she replied, “do you see that statue? It is called the Statue of Liberty; and it stands on the spot where barbarians sacrificed the best of Kings, the most courageous of Queens, and the most heroic of sisters! It is a monument to commemorate the most odious of crimes. I cannot endure to be thus near a place doomed to execration.”

I could not understand this violent emotion, and I flew to rejoin my nurse, who, like me, was overjoyed to see France; but I never shall forget the grief that overwhelmed my mother when she cast her eyes on the fatal Place Louis XV.*

A lady, one of our relations, was intimately ac-

* The statue was shortly after destroyed. During the Consulate it was replaced by a temporary monument not more appropriate than that of Liberty. It represented the hundred and six French departments dancing in a ring. The good taste and the feeling of propriety which distinguished Napoleon induced him to renounce the completion of the plan. He indignantly rejected the idea of a dance on the Place Louis XV.

quainted with Madame Tallien, to whom my father by this means obtained an introduction. Madame Tallien, who was then in the height of her influence, promised to do anything to serve my father and to obtain for him speedily the documents without which he could not be certain of remaining undisturbed in Paris.

On the day after this visit we had a serious alarm. Just as we had sat down to breakfast we heard a great noise of horses prancing about in the street. My mother, who was always apprehensive, peeped through the blind of one of the windows that looked to the Place Louis XV., where she saw a company of dragoons, whose commanding officer was ranging them at the entrance of the Rue Saint Florentin.

"Let no one pass this way," he exclaimed. "The second piquet is at the other end of the street, therefore they cannot escape."

My poor mother was dreadfully frightened. She doubted not that our false passports had been discovered, and that they had come to arrest us all. She therefore entreated my father to burn all the letters he had brought from the emigrants to their relations in France.

Our host, who was an honest, worthy man, guessing the situation of his lodgers, came up-stairs with the view of comforting us.

"I have closed the *porte cochère*," said he, "and if,

as I suspect, they are coming to make a domiciliary visit here, I have a place of concealment in reserve for you."

He then touched a little spring which was artfully concealed behind one of the ornaments in the frame of the looking-glass that hung over the chimney. The panel opened and we beheld a little staircase leading to a closet.

I was highly amused at the bustle and confusion which pervaded the whole house. I was but six years of age, and, consequently, I could form no idea of the danger that threatened my parents. I was wholly engaged in admiring the uniforms of the soldiers, and in burning my father's papers, which made an admirable bonfire, and I was, above all, delighted at the idea of playing at hide and seek in the secret panel behind the chimney-glass.

However, tranquillity was gradually restored. The military did not demand admittance, and one of the servants came to inform us that the domiciliary visit was not intended for us. My parents now began to entertain fears for the safety of one of their friends, M. d'Aubenton, who resided in the house which the servant said was about to be visited. M. d'Aubenton had just returned to France, where he hoped to spend the remainder of his days; but he was compelled once again to absent himself from his country, where momentary dangers assailed the emigrants

who were under surveillance, or whose papers were not regular.

After an interval of painful anxiety, my father and mother learned that the military had come to arrest M. de Lacretelle, who lodged in the same house with M. d'Aubenton. The latter was not molested that day.

A crowd immediately filled the street, for at that time an arrest was a sort of spectacle. The dragoons with difficulty succeeded in quelling the disorder, but the mob continued shouting furiously. M. de Lacretelle appeared at his balcony; he was applauded, hissed, and finally arrested and conveyed to prison, whence he was banished to Cayenne with MM. de Barbé-Marbois,* de Barthélemy, etc. They had opposed some rigorous measures, for which the Directory thought proper to send them out of the way. This circumstance redounds more to their honour than even the high talents for which they are so justly celebrated.

My father got over this last trouble with no other loss than that of some letters, which were destined to administer comfort to several anxious families. But this was an unavoidable misfortune.

* M. de Barbé-Marbois has written an account of all he saw and all that happened to him during his banishment. He placed his manuscript in the hands of Madame de Montesson, who read it to her friends at Romainville. I never heard a more pleasing and interesting narrative, and I cannot conceive why the author should hesitate to present it to the public. It contains some highly curious and useful details on an island which has now become an agreeable place of abode after having been exceedingly insalubrious.

I saw at Madame de V——'s a man who was very celebrated at the time. I allude to M. Ribbing, who was known in Paris by no other appellation than that of the *bel assassin*, because he was supposed to have been one of the persons concerned in the murder of the unfortunate King of Sweden.

At a period when all Kings were regarded as tyrants and objects of public hatred, to rid the world of them was a meritorious action in the eyes of Republicans. Men connected with the Government eagerly sought M. Ribbing's acquaintance, and women vied with each other in their endeavours to please him. On the public promenades and in the theatres he was constantly pointed at as the *bel assassin*, a title which inspired me with so much terror that when I first saw M. Ribbing I ran to hide myself, lest I should become one of his victims.

I was not of an age to comprehend the difference which the world has agreed to establish between political and civil crimes. Whenever I was in the presence of M. Ribbing, I was almost afraid to breathe; and his countenance, which was mild and dignified, appeared to me perfectly ferocious.

I do not know how far he was entitled to the reputation which he enjoyed at that time, when the crime was imputed to him by way of recommendation; the fact is, that M. Ribbing is an excellent husband and father, and a most devoted friend. I

saw him a short time ago in Paris with his family, amidst whom he appeared to enjoy that happiness which certainly he could never know if his conscience reproached him with the crime that is laid to his charge.

We had just begun to enjoy tranquillity when the law of the 18th Fructidor obliged all the emigrants to quit Paris within three days, and France within eight, under pain of death.* We were, therefore, obliged to pack up and set off, leaving my father's affairs quite unsettled.

On the same day, the 18th Fructidor, my brother, happening to go out in a coat with a black velvet collar, was attacked and pursued by an infuriated mob, who accused him of being a Chouan. He would in all probability have been murdered had it not been for the courageous interference of one of his friends (I believe M. de Pontécoulant, Peer of France), who succeeded in making the misguided people understand that it was possible to wear a black velvet collar without being a Chouan; and that my brother had merely neglected to banish from his costume that which was reasonably offensive to all true Republicans, since it was a part of the uniform adopted by

* M. de Mesnard, brother of the Comte de Mesnard, Chief Equerry to the Duchesse de Berry, would not leave France, and hoped by concealing himself to evade pursuit. His retreat was, however, discovered, and he was shot on the Plain de Grenelle. Like his brother, he was distinguished for courage and every estimable quality.

the enemies of good Frenchmen. This complimentary speech gained the suffrages of the multitude, and was received with loud cries of *Vive la République!*

My brother returned home immediately and begged my mother to take off the fatal collar. I took it to dress my doll, never dreaming that it had well nigh cost my brother his life.

The fresh troubles which were now rising up induced my brother to accompany us abroad. He had emigrated with my parents, and had even served courageously in the French army.

Madame Tallien* used every endeavour to enable us to remain in France. But the law was peremptory, and she could obtain no exception in our favour. We accordingly returned to Altona three weeks after we had left it.

It was not until the year 1800 that we were permitted to return home for a permanency. Public tranquillity was then disturbed only by the events of a glorious war; the arts and literature were protected and encouraged; exiles were recalled, and all seemed to promise durable repose; but alas! our trials were not yet at an end.

* Before the Revolution my father's family wished to arrange a marriage between him and M^{lle}. Cabarrus, who was a rich and beautiful heiress. He, however, was passionately attached to my mother, and he experienced no little trouble in evading the marriage that was projected for him. This circumstance was generously forgotten and forgiven by M^{lle}. Cabarrus, afterwards Madame Tallien, and she always proved herself ready to serve the man who had declined accepting her hand.

LETTER XXVII.

MADAME ——— TO MADAME FANNY DE
BEAUHARNAIS.

Madame Louis de Girardin.

“IN common with every one in France who can read, I have, madame, the happiness of knowing you, but I have not the honour of being known to you. When I ought to open this correspondence with pleasure, why do I begin it with tears? Alas! at this moment yours are flowing; for you have seen the newspapers, and the fate of M. de Beauharnais is known to you. The situation of his unfortunate wife doubtless fills you with anxiety, and redoubles your sorrow. Be assured, madame, that the health of that charming woman, though greatly affected by so dreadful a shock, is, however, less menaced than the tranquillity of her mind and the sensibility of her heart. She continued during two days ignorant of the terrible catastrophe. A letter written to her by your nephew informed her of his removal to the Conciergerie, and that he was soon to appear before the Tribunal; but hope had absorbed all her faculties, and there was no longer room for fear. While every one else trembled,

she was confident. She remained long under this illusion, which fresh events speedily dissipated. It was extremely painful for us to hear her talk with warmth of affection and tenderness of her future projects, when he who was the object of them never could enjoy them. We could not appear joyful; we were silent. We often turned aside to give vent to our sighs, and more than one involuntary tear dropped from our eyes. The horrible papers of the 8th had been kept from your niece. She asked for them at first without attaching importance to their non-appearance, and only insisted upon seeing them in consequence of the pretexts made for withholding them. She now suspected the cruel truth, which our silence and our sighs confirmed.

“The first effect was a long fainting fit, from which she only recovered to be plunged into a more regular and violent despair. So many hopes frustrated! so much felicity vanished! We did not try to console her, persuaded that grief could find its term in its excess; in fact, that of Madame de Beauharnais fed, as it were, upon itself, and changed gradually into melancholy, that sad benefit of time, which only lessens our sufferings to render them permanent.

“We often spoke to her about her children. The best way to make her value her life was to prove to her that it was necessary to beings whom she so

dearly loved. To mention this is to say that we also talked to her of the happiness which you would experience from her attentions when she should leave the prison.

“To try to divert Madame de Beauharnais from her sorrow would be useless, but we may hope to diminish its bitterness, not by argument, but by suggesting the duties which remain to be fulfilled by a heart such as hers. You may be certain, madame, that we neglect nothing. Could it be possible to know your niece and be indifferent to her distress?

“I have the honour to be, etc.”*

* It is supposed that the devoted friend who wrote this letter was Madame d'Alguillon, afterwards Madame Louis de Girardin. She was a lady of whom the Empress often spoke, and with the greatest affection.

LETTER XXVIII.

MADAME DE BEAUHARNAIS TO HER CHILDREN.

M. de Gallifet.

“THE hand which will deliver this to you is faithful and sure. You will receive it from a friend who knows and has shared my sorrows. I know not by what accident she has hitherto been spared. I call this accident fortunate ; she regards it as a calamity. .

“ ‘Is it not disgraceful to live,’ said she yesterday, ‘when all who are good have the honour of dying ?’

“ May Heaven, as the reward of her courage, refuse her the fatal honour she desires !

“ As for me, I am qualified for that honour, and I am preparing myself for receiving it. Why has disease spared me so long ? But I must not murmur. As a wife I ought to follow the fate of my husband ; and can there now be any fate more glorious than to ascend the scaffold ? It is a patent of immortality purchased by a prompt and pleasing death.

“ My children, your father is dead, and your mother is about to follow him ; but as before that final stroke the assassins leave me a few moments

to myself, I wish to employ them in writing to you. Socrates, when condemned, philosophised with his disciples; a mother, on the point of undergoing a similar fate, may discourse with her children.

“My last sigh will be for you, and I wish to make my last words a lasting lesson. Time was when I gave you lessons in a more pleasing way; but the present will not be the less useful that it is given at so serious a moment. I have the weakness to water it with my tears; I shall soon have the courage to seal it with my blood.

“Hitherto it was impossible to be happier than I have been. While to my union with your father I owed my felicity, I may venture to think and to say that to my character I was indebted for that union.* It met with many difficulties, but without artifice or effort I overcame them. I found in my heart the means of winning the affection of my husband's relations; patience and gentleness always succeed at last in gaining the good-will of others. You also, my dear children, possess natural advantages which cost little and are of great value; but you must learn how

* Josephine could not relate to her children the faults of a father who had just been taken from them in so tragical a manner. His cruel death had, perhaps, buried in oblivion the circumstances which disunited two persons whom misfortune had reconciled. When pity finds a place in the female heart, there is no longer any room for anger. The pride of Madame De Beauharnais was flattered by her husband's success in the Constituent Assembly. Her love for him returned, and his sufferings made her pardon everything.

to employ them, and that is what I still feel a pleasure in teaching you by my example.

“When you recollect where I was born, you will readily perceive how useful such qualities must have been to me in my early years. It may be supposed that they could not but be advantageous to others.

“In the first period of my life which I passed in Martinique, I had before my eyes the singular spectacle of slavery, rendered more frightful by the despotism which accompanied it. Imagine to yourself from seven to eight hundred unfortunate beings to whom Nature had given complexions of ebony and wool for hair, and whom cupidity (rendered ferocious by the danger incurred in satisfying itself) had torn from their country and brought in bondage to a foreign land. There, separated as families, but assembled in factories, or grouped as labourers in the field, they toil under a burning sun and the lash of the driver; they till a soil which their sweat, even their blood, never fertilises for them. To enrich barbarous masters these unfortunate beings have been cut off from the common law of humanity! To satiate the avarice of planters they thus vegetate, without property and liberty! To feed the luxury of Europe they are from childhood condemned without hope to a life and state of dreadful suffering. Meanwhile the tyrants of whom they are the slaves, or rather the beasts of burden, are gorged with

wealth, intoxicated with enjoyments, surfeited with pleasure. Vain of a colour which is a mere accident of nature, proud of their superiority in knowledge, in which respect, however, they stand at a far greater distance from well-informed Europeans than the negroes do from them, they forget their duty as Christians or even as men. To complete their cruelty they make their impious conduct the foundation of a system of law, and justify by the sophisms of Inquisitors a Government of cannibals.

“I have thus sketched the general picture of the colony during the period of my infancy: that of our plantation is very different. Masters and slaves, it is true, were also there; the former were just and humane, the latter cheerful and industrious. Though nominally slaves, our negroes enjoyed the advantages of free society and many of the pleasures of life: love was not denied them, and well-assorted marriages rewarded mutual affection. Far from their country, they saw young families growing up around them, and, as their alliances extended, felt all the sympathy of new attachments. In the evening, when the tambourine was heard,ⁿ and they joined in their national dances among groves of palm-trees, they fancied themselves again in their country, and wept for joy.*

* Notwithstanding the constant declamations on the barbarity of the colonists, it is certain that many of them were adored by their negroes, from whom they received proofs of boundless affection, at the horrible

"I was no stranger to their sports, because I was neither insensible to their sorrows nor indifferent to their labours.

"I lived with our aunt Renaudin, that excellent woman, that kind parent, that worthy soul, of whom we have so often spoken, and who has died with grief at seeing her niece sacrificed, as she long lamented, when her foresight separated us. I say her foresight, though, perhaps, it was then only her fondness.

"Circumstances brought to Martinique a handsome and meritorious young officer. I may be proud to praise him; he was your father, who after making me a happy wife was destined to render me a mother at once blessed and unfortunate.

"The husband of Madame Renaudin managed not only his own plantations but those which the MM. Beauharnais inherited. The propriety of our union appeared unquestionable; especially as the marriage planned by the two families for your uncle had not his approbation, he having made another choice.

"Here I must record the gratitude I owe to my

period of the massacres. Several planters used to be quoted as examples of humanity: "Happy as one of Gallifet's negroes," used to be a proverb among the slaves. M. de Gallifet, who possessed a large fortune, was beloved on account of the humanity with which his plantations were managed; his negroes were always well fed, and received some money when they distinguished themselves in the performance of their duty, and after a few years became owners of a piece of land which they cultivated for their own profit. When sick the greatest care was taken of them. This example was followed by several colonists, whose memory is cherished by their slaves.

excellent brother-in-law, who has under various circumstances given me proofs of the most sincere friendship, though he was of quite a different opinion from your father, who embraced the new ideas with all the enthusiasm of a lively imagination. He fancied liberty was to be secured by obtaining concessions from the King, whom he venerated; but all was lost, and nothing gained but anarchy. Who will arrest the torrent, O God? Unless Thy powerful hand control and restrain it, we are undone!

“For my part, my children, I am about to die as your father died, a victim of the fury he always opposed, but to which he fell a sacrifice. I leave life without hatred of France and its assassins, whom I despise; but I am penetrated with sorrow for the misfortunes of my country. Honour my memory by sharing my sentiments. I leave for your inheritance the glory of your father and the name of your mother, whom some who have been unfortunate will bear in remembrance. Love, regret, and benediction.”

Madame de Beauharnais, when relieved from prison, resumed the care of her children. Not being then in France I have no knowledge of the circumstances which attended her release. As my purpose is to relate only what I have seen or have been informed of on unquestionable authority, I shall not attempt to speak on a fact so strictly historical, lest I should

incur the risk of representing it to the public incorrectly ; this could not fail to happen were I to consult different persons. I believe that Madame de Beauharnais was set at liberty on the 9th Thermidor, along with many others who then languished in prison.

The following letters, which are posterior to that epoch, have been transmitted to me by a person in no way connected with the deposit mentioned at the commencement of this volume. I have not seen the originals, but I have no reason to suspect the good faith of the friend who has enabled me to lay them before the public.

LETTER XXIX.

TO MADAME FANNY DE BEAUHARNAIS.

Trait of Filial Affection in Eugène de Beauharnais.

“ I MUST, my dear aunt, acquaint you with a charming trait in our Eugène. To-day, the 7th Thermidor, which is a melancholy anniversary, I sent for him, and, presenting him with the engraved portrait of his unfortunate father, I said :

“ ‘ There, my son, is the reward of six months of attentive study and good conduct ; that portrait is yours. Hang it up in your chamber and look at it often. Let him whose features are here delineated be your constant model. He was the most amiable and most affectionate of men ; had he been spared he would have been the best of fathers.’

“ Eugène uttered not a word. His eyes were cast down ; a glow suffused his countenance, and his painful emotion was visible. He covered the picture with kisses, and, as my son and I embraced and mingled our tears together, the portrait of Alexandre seemed to smile complacently on us.

“ This evening, when all my friends had retired except Cubière and Saint ——, my son entered, fol-

lowed by six of his young companions, all having the portrait of Alexandre suspended from their necks by a black and white ribbon.

“‘Mother,’ said Eugene, ‘I have founded a new order of knighthood. There is the hero,’ added he, pointing to his father’s portrait, ‘and here are the first members,’ introducing his young friends. ‘It is called the order of *filial love*, and, if you will come into the little drawing-room, you shall see the first inauguration.’

“My dear aunt, I leave you to judge of my feelings. The little drawing-room was tastefully hung with draperies intermingled with wreaths of ivy, roses, and laurel. There I recognised the handiwork of Victorine. At intervals were little inscriptions extracted from the remarkable speeches of M. de Beauharnais, and above these were wax tapers in branch candlesticks. This heroic and simple decoration served as a frame to a sort of altar, on which, among bunches of flowers and wax lights, was placed the full-length portrait of my unfortunate husband. Three crowns, one of white and red roses, another of laurel, and a third of cypress, were suspended above the frame, and before the picture were two little vases containing perfume. Six other young friends of my son were ranged round the altar in respectful silence. All were armed with swords, which, on our entrance, they drew, and swore to

love their parents, to assist each other, and to defend their country. My son then unfurled a little flag and waved it over the portrait of his father. We embraced each other with mingled smiles and tears.

“Oh! my dear aunt, if anything can console me for my irreparable loss it is surely my children, whose amiable qualities compensate me for all I feel on their account. How I regretted the absence of Hortense! But she is with you. She will read my letter, and will recognise her own affections in those of her brother. Eugène, I am certain, will always bear in mind his father’s virtues and courage, and will prove himself worthy of the name he bears, both as a soldier and a citizen. His heart is animated by every good and noble sentiment.

“You will aid me, my dear aunt, in the important task that has devolved upon me. Can I entertain the least doubt respecting the result of my children’s education? I cannot complain of my loss when I think of you and them.”

LETTER XXX.

MADAME DE BEAUHARNAIS TO MADAME ——.

She Hesitates to Accept the Hand of Général Bonaparte. —
Mesdames V—— and D——, Napoleon's Mistresses.

“I AM urged, my dear, to marry again by the advice of all my friends (I may almost say), by the commands of my aunt and the prayers of my children. Why are you not here to help me by your advice on this important occasion, and to tell me whether I ought or ought not to consent to a union, which certainly seems calculated to relieve me from the discomfort of my present situation? Your friendship would render you clear-sighted to my interests, and a word from you would suffice to bring me to a decision.

“Among my visitors you have seen Général Bonaparte; he is the man who wishes to become a father to the orphans of Alexandre de Beauharnais and a husband to his widow.

“‘Do you love him?’ is naturally your first question.

“‘My answer is, perhaps — No.’

“‘Do you dislike him?’

“‘No,’ again; but the sentiments I entertain towards him are of that lukewarm kind which true devotees think worst of all in matters of religion. Now love being a sort of religion, my feelings ought to be very different from what they really are. This is the point on which I want your advice, which would fix the wavering of my irresolute disposition. To come to a decision has always been too much for my Creole inertness, and I find it easier to obey the wishes of others.

“I admire the General’s courage; the extent of his information on every subject on which he converses; his shrewd intelligence, which enables him to understand the thoughts of others before they are expressed; but I confess I am somewhat fearful of that control which he seems anxious to exercise over all about him. There is something in his scrutinising glance that cannot be described; it awes even our directors, therefore it may well be supposed to intimidate a woman. He talks of his passion for me with a degree of earnestness which renders it impossible to doubt his sincerity, yet this very circumstance, which you would suppose likely to please me, is precisely that which has withheld me from giving the consent which I have often been on the very point of uttering.

“My spring of life is past. Can I then hope to preserve for any length of time that ardour of affec-

tion which in the General amounts almost to madness? If his love should cool, as it certainly will, after our marriage, will he not reproach me for having prevented him from forming a more advantageous connection? What, then, shall I say? What shall I do? I may shut myself up and weep. Fine consolation, truly! methinks I hear you say. But unavailing as I know it is, weeping is, I assure you, my only consolation whenever my poor heart receives a wound. Write to me quickly, and pray scold me if you think me wrong. You know everything is welcome that comes from you.

“Barras assures me if I marry the General he will get him appointed Commander-in-Chief of the army of Italy. This favour, though not yet granted, occasions some murmuring among Bonaparte’s brother-officers. When speaking to me yesterday on the subject, the General said:

“‘Do they think I cannot get forward without their patronage? One day or other they will all be too happy if I grant them mine. I have a good sword by my side which will carry me on.’

“What do you think of this self-confidence? Does it not savour of excessive vanity? A general of brigade to talk of patronising the chiefs of the Government? It is very ridiculous! Yet I know not how it happens, his ambitious spirit sometimes wins upon me so far that I am almost tempted to believe

in the practicability of any project he takes into his head — and who can foresee what he may attempt ?

“All here regret your absence, and we only console ourselves by constantly speaking of you, and by endeavouring to follow you step by step in the beautiful country in which you are journeying. Were I sure of finding you in Italy, I would consent to be married to-morrow, on condition of being permitted to accompany the General. But we might cross each other on the way, therefore I think it most prudent to await your answer ; pray send it speedily.

“Madame Tallien desires me to present her love to you. She is still fair and good as ever. She employs her immense influence only for the benefit of the unfortunate, and when she performs a favour she appears as pleased and satisfied as though she herself were the obliged party. Her friendship for me is most affectionate and sincere, and of my regard for her I need only say that it is equal to that which I entertain for you.

“Hortense grows more and more interesting every day. Her pretty figure is getting fully developed, and if I were so inclined I should have ample reason to rail at time, who confers charms on the daughter at the expense of the mother. But truly I have other things in my head. I try to banish gloomy thoughts, and look forward to a more propitious future, for we shall soon meet never to part again.

But for this marriage, which harasses and unsettles me, I could be gay in spite of everything ; were it once over, happen what might, I could resign myself to my fate. I am inured to suffering, and if I be destined to taste fresh sorrow I can support it, provided my children, my aunt, and you, remain to comfort me.

“ You know we have agreed to dispense with all formal terminations to our letters. So adieu, my friend ! ”

In fact Madame de Beauharnais long hesitated before she resolved to espouse the man who was destined to raise her to so high a station. Her first marriage had not been a happy one, and she was not without apprehension as to the consequences of entering into that state again. She often told us that she was alarmed at words which occasionally dropped from Bonaparte, and which indicated an ambition, incapable, as she thought, of even being satisfied. Her family and friends at last determined her ; and she became the wife of the general who soon subdued Europe with that sword which he expected was to be forever triumphant.

Josephine had not at first that tender affection for her second husband which she afterwards felt. To give a protector to her daughter, a guide to her son, were the sole reasons which induced her to yield to

the wishes of those who took an interest in her fate.

Letters from Napoleon to Josephine have been published, and they prove how fond he was of his wife, and how vexed he was to find that her sentiments were not as passionate as his own. He was extremely jealous: his distrust shewed itself on every occasion, and was not confined to one person, but extended to every man who visited Madame Bonaparte. For the sake of domestic tranquillity she was gradually obliged to shut her door against all her old friends, whose company was displeasing to her husband. She endured unjust suspicions and violent scenes with astonishing patience and mildness. This conduct at last won for her the most sincere and durable attachment on the part of Napoleon, who, before he consented to renounce her, long combated the counsel of his Ministers and his relations to contract a union with some sovereign family. As if anything could farther elevate the extraordinary man, who had subjugated all the crowned heads whose alliance he now courted!

It was with the greatest pain and reluctance that he consented to the divorce, which was really the first of his misfortunes. I have already stated what relations he afterwards maintained with this excellent woman, who never regretted the throne until there appeared to be danger in sharing it.

In the familiar conversations at Navarre the Empress used often to say that the Emperor was without contradiction the most agreeable of men, when he chose to take the trouble of trying to please a sex which he loved; but that he had in general a very unfavourable opinion of women. He had numerous adventures which confirmed his notions in this respect. He related his adventures to Josephine, who received his confidence with the indulgence of a friend, though often not without much chagrin. In this way she always succeeded in reclaiming him, and he used constantly to say that there was no woman like Josephine, though his actions often proved that this sentiment was not always strongly impressed on his mind.

Nothing could equal the attention he paid to the Empress, when the effervescence which had made him withdraw from her went off, and he returned full of repentance. He often made her unhappy, but she was consoled almost as soon as she was afflicted, for his fantasies were as fleeting as they were violent.

The Empress believed that Napoleon never had a real regard for any woman but herself, Madame V——,* and Madame D——,† who were all worthy of sincere love on account of their amiable character and boundless attachment to him.

* After being married to a general she died in child-bed.

† Madame D—— still lives, and it is said has not ceased to be handsome.

It ought besides to be observed that he never offended against decorum by making a display of irregular conduct, or publicly avowing improper connections. Such connections might sometimes be conjectured from the insolence of favourites, and the sort of publicity which they studiously gave to what they ought to have sought to conceal; but nothing could be suspected from the conduct of Napoleon, for he was always polite and respectful towards them, and never said a word by which any one could be compromised. Those women, then, who were pointed out as his mistresses, must have obtained that distinction in consequence of their own wish, or on account of the sudden elevation of husbands who may have been base enough to accept brilliant or lucrative places in return for loss of honour and domestic happiness.

LETTER XXXI.

MADAME BONAPARTE TO GÉNÉRAL BONAPARTE.

Napoleon's Jealousy. — Junot, Duc d'Abrantes. — The Duchesse d'Abrantes. — Her Extravagance. — The Duc de Raguse. — Reverse of Fortune Experienced by the Duchesse d'Abrantes. — Her Daughter Turns Nun.

“Is it possible, General, that the letter I have just received comes from you? I can scarcely credit it when I compare that letter with others now before me, to which your love imparts so many charms! My eyes, indeed, would persuade me that your hand traced these lines; but my heart refuses to believe that a letter from you could ever have caused the mortal anguish I experience on perusing these expressions of your displeasure, which afflict me the more when I consider how much pain they must have cost you.

“I know not what I have done to provoke some malignant enemy to destroy my peace by disturbing yours; but certainly a powerful motive must influence some one in continually renewing calumnies against me, and giving them a sufficient appearance of probability to impose on the man who has hitherto judged

me worthy of his affection and confidence. These two sentiments are necessary to my happiness, and if they are to be so soon withdrawn from me, I can only regret that I was ever blest in possessing them or knowing you.

“On my first acquaintance with you the affliction with which I was overwhelmed led me to believe that my heart must ever remain a stranger to any sentiment resembling love. The sanguinary scenes of which I had been a witness and a victim constantly haunted my thoughts. I therefore apprehended no danger to myself from the frequent enjoyment of your society, still less did I imagine that I could for a single moment have fixed your choice.

“I, like every one else, admired your talents and acquirements, and better than any one else I foresaw your future glory ; but still I loved you only for the services you rendered to my country. Why did you seek to convert admiration into a more tender sentiment by availing yourself of all those powers of pleasing with which you are so eminently gifted, since, so shortly after having united your destiny with mine, you regret the felicity you have conferred upon me ?

“Do you think I can ever forget the love you once cherished for me ? Can I ever become indifferent to the man who has blessed me with the most enthusiastic and ardent passion ? Can I ever efface from my memory your paternal affection for Hortense, the

advice and example you have set before Eugène ? If all this appears impossible, how can you for a moment suspect me of bestowing a thought on any but yourself ?

“ Instead of listening to traducers, who, for reasons which I cannot explain, seek to disturb our happiness, why do you not silence them by enumerating the benefits you have bestowed on a woman whose heart could never be reproached with ingratitude ? The knowledge of what you have done for my children would check the malignity of these calumniators, for they would then see that the strongest link of my attachment for you depends on my character as a mother. Your subsequent conduct, which has claimed the admiration of all Europe, could have no other effect than to make me adore the husband who gave me his hand when I was poor and unfortunate. Every step you take adds to the glory of the name I bear ; yet this is the moment that has been selected for persuading you that I no longer love you ! Surely nothing can be more wicked and absurd than the conduct of those who are about you, and are jealous of your marked superiority !

“ Yes, I still love you, and no less tenderly than ever. Those who allege the contrary know that they speak falsely. To those very persons I have frequently written to inquire about you and to recommend them to console you by their friendship for

the absence of her who is your best and truest friend.

“Yet what has been the conduct of the men in whom you repose confidence, and on whose testimony you form so unjust an opinion of me? They conceal from you every circumstance calculated to alleviate the anguish of our separation, and they seek to fill your mind with suspicion in order to drive you from a country with which they are dissatisfied. Their object is to make you unhappy. I see this plainly, though you are blind to their perfidious intentions. Being no longer their equal you have become their enemy, and every one of your victories is a fresh ground of envy and hatred.

“I know their intrigues, and I disdain to avenge myself by naming the men whom I despise, but whose valour and talents may be useful to you in the great enterprise which you have so propitiously commenced. When you return, I will unmask these enemies of your glory—but no; the happiness of seeing you again will banish from my recollection the misery they are endeavouring to inflict upon me, and I shall think only of what they have done to promote the success of your projects.

“I acknowledge that I see a great deal of company; for every one is eager to compliment me on your success, and I confess I have not resolution to close my door against those who speak of you. I also con-

fess that a great portion of my visitors are gentlemen. Men understand your bold projects better than women, and they speak with enthusiasm of your glorious achievements, while my female friends only complain of you for having carried away their husbands, brothers, or fathers. I take no pleasure in their society if they do not praise you ; yet there are some among them whose hearts and understandings claim my highest regard because they entertain sincere friendship for you. In this number I may distinguish Mesdames d' Aiguillon, Tallien, and my aunt. They are almost constantly with me, and they can tell you, ungrateful as you are, whether *I have been coquetting with everybody*. These are your words, and they would be hateful to me were I not certain that you have disavowed them and are sorry for having written them.

“I am terrified at the numerous perils which surround you, and of the extent of which I should have had no idea had not Eugène insisted on my writing to entreat that you will not fly in the face of danger, and unnecessarily expose a life which is precious not merely to your family and friends. Remember that on you depends the destiny of your companions in arms, and of millions of soldiers who would not have fortitude to endure the hardships to which they are exposed but for the encouragement which your presence affords them.

“Do not, I conjure you, overexert your strength. Listen not to the dictates of your own ever active mind, but to the advice of those who love you. Berthier, Bourienne, Eugène, and Caffarelli, who are more cool than you, may sometimes view things more justly. They are devoted to you, therefore listen to them, but to them only, and you and I shall be happy.

“I sometimes receive honours here which cause me no small degree of embarrassment. I am not accustomed to this sort of homage, and I see it is displeasing to our authorities, who are always suspicious and fearful of losing their newly gotten power. Never mind them, you will say; and I should not, but that I know they will try to injure you, and I cannot endure the thought of contributing in any way to those feelings of enmity which your triumphs sufficiently account for. If they are envious now, what will they be when you return crowned with fresh laurels? Heaven knows to what lengths their malignity will then carry them! But you will be here, and then nothing can vex me.

“But I will say no more of them nor of your suspicions, which I do not refute one by one because they are all equally devoid of probability; and to make amends for the unpleasant commencement of this letter I will tell you something which I know will please you.

“Hortense, in her efforts to console me, endeavours as far as possible to conceal her anxiety for you and her brother, and she exerts all her ingenuity to banish that melancholy, the existence of which you doubt, but which, I assure you, never forsakes me. If by her lively conversation and interesting talents she sometimes succeeds in drawing a smile from me, she joyfully exclaims :

“ ‘ Dear mamma, that will be known at Cairo.’ ”

“The fatal word immediately recalls to my mind the distance which separates me from you and my son, and restores the melancholy which it was intended to divert. I am obliged to make great efforts to conceal my grief from my daughter, who by a word or a look transports me to the very place which she would wish to banish from my thoughts.

“Hortense’s figure is daily becoming more and more graceful. She dresses with great taste ; and though not quite so handsome as your sisters, she may certainly be thought agreeable when even they are present.

“My good aunt passes her life in suffering without complaining, consoling the distressed, speaking of you, and writing poetry. For my part my time is occupied in writing to you, hearing your praises, reading the journals in which your name appears in every page, thinking of you, looking forward to the time when I may see you hourly, complaining of your

absence and longing for your return; and when my task is ended I begin it over again. Are all these proofs of indifference? You will never have any others from me, and if I receive no worse from you, I shall have no great reason to complain, in spite of the ill-natured stories I hear about *a certain lady* in whom you are said to take a lively interest. But why should I doubt you? You assure me that you love me, and, judging of your heart by my own, I believe you.

“Heaven knows when or where you will receive this letter! May it restore you to that confidence which you ought never to have lost, and convince you more than ever that as long as I live I shall love you as dearly as I did on the day of our separation. Adieu — believe me — love me, and receive a thousand kisses.”

It is well known that when in Egypt Napoleon's jealousy was powerfully excited by the reports of Junot, who pretended to receive from Paris positive accounts of the coquetry of Josephine.

I knew nothing of these circumstances to which the Empress alluded but rarely and vaguely. I however observed that she disliked the Duc d'Abrantes. She frequently laughed at his uncultivated manners, observing that he behaved with no more ceremony to a Duchess than to a sutler's wife, and that he could

not divest himself of the habits of his early life. Her Majesty rendered full justice to his courage and military talents.

The Duc and Duchesse d' Abrantes lived in a style of splendour which pleased Napoleon. He was anxious that his Court should be distinguished for brilliance and magnificence; and far from checking the extravagant expenditure of his nobility, he encouraged it by his approval. He nicknamed the Duc de Raguse *King Marmont I.*, and Junot, *Marmont II.*, because these two generals lived in greater magnificence than any others in the army.

The Duchesse d' Abrantes, who was young, beautiful, and accomplished, was one of the brightest ornaments of the Imperial Court. Her graceful and elegant form imparted peculiar elegance to everything she wore, and any new fashion which she introduced immediately became general among other ladies of rank. It is said that the expense of her toilet amounted to 200,000 francs.

I know not whether she was really guilty of this enormous extravagance; but if so, it must be a source of painful regret to her in her present straitened circumstances.

Her eldest daughter, who was exceedingly beautiful, took her vows as a nun of *la charité*. This young lady, though endowed with graces and accomplishments, which would have rendered her a distinguished

ornament of society, chose to bury herself in a convent on the loss of her fortune, of which she would, doubtless, have made a benevolent use. The cruel vicissitudes of fate, of which she had herself been the victim, will qualify her for the task of soothing the distress of others ; and in her humble asylum she is attended by the blessings of the poor and unfortunate.

LETTER XXXII.

TO EUGÈNE DE BEAUHARNAIS IN EGYPT.

Mlle. de Beauharnais. — Her Progress. — **MM. Érard, Pape, Pleyel, Petzold, Dietz, Foignet, and Labarre.** — **Mdles. Bertrand and Desargus.** — Cashmere Shawls Sent to Josephine, Mesdames Bourienne, Hamelin, Visconti. — Beauty of the Empress's Shawls. — Patterns Sent by Her to Constantinople. — Sale at Malmaison.

“ I LEARN with great pleasure, my dear Eugène, that your conduct is worthy of the name you bear, and of the protector under whom it is so easy to learn to become a great captain.

“ Bonaparte has written to me that you are everything he can wish, and as he is no flatterer my heart is proud to read your eulogy, sketched by a hand which is usually far from being lavish in praise. You well know I never doubted your capability to undertake great things, or the brilliant courage which you inherit; but you, alas, know how much I disliked your removal from me, fearing that your natural impetuosity might carry you too far, and that it might prevent you from submitting to the numerous petty details of discipline, which must be very disagreeable when the rank is only subaltern.

“Judge, then, of my joy on learning that you remember my advice, and that you are as obedient to your superiors in command as you are kind and humane to those beneath you. This conduct, my child, makes me quite happy; and these words, I know, will reward you more than all the favours you can receive. Read them often, and repeat to yourself that your mother, though far from you, complains not of her lot, since she knows that yours will be brilliant, and will deserve so to be.

“Your sister shares all my feelings, and will tell you so herself. But that of which I am sure she will not speak, and which is therefore my duty to tell, is her attention to me and to her aunt! Love her, my son, for to me she brings consolation, and she overflows with affection for you! She prosecutes her studies with uncommon success, but music, I believe, will be the art which she will carry to the highest perfection. With her sweet voice, which is now well cultivated, she sings romances in a manner that would surprise you. I have just bought her an excellent piano from the best maker, Érard,* which redoubles her passion for that charming art, which

*MM. Érard were at that time the only pianoforte manufacturers who could compete with the celebrated Broadwood of London; but their reputation is now shared with MM. Pleyel, Pape, Petzold, and Dietz. The latter is the inventor of a new instrument called the *polyplectron*, which is much patronised by the Royal Family and nobility of Paris. MM. Érard, however, still retain their superiority in the manufacture of the pedal harp, and by an invention equally simple and ingenious they have brought

you prefer to every other ; that, perhaps, accounts for your sister applying to it with so much assiduity.

“ I am not afraid of wearying you with this little family gossip, which would appear puerile to many men, surrounded as you are with objects of the greatest curiosity and importance ; but you love your family, I know you do, even more than you love glory, and for that reason I dwell on such subjects.

“ Were you here you would be telling me a thousand times a day to beware of the men who pay particular attention to Hortense. Some there are who do so whom you do not like, and whom you seem to fear she may prefer. Set your mind at rest ; she is a bit of a coquette, is pleased with her success, and torments her victims ; but her heart is free. I am the confidante of all her thoughts and feelings, which have hitherto been just what they ought to be. She now knows that when she thinks of marrying it is not my consent alone she has to seek, and that my will is subordinate to that of the man to whom we owe everything. The knowledge of this fact must prevent her from fixing her choice in a way that may not meet the approval of Bonaparte, and the latter will not give your sister in marriage to any one to whom you can object.

to perfection that hitherto defective instrument. Artists who have attained the proficiency of MM. Foignet and Labarre, and Mdles. Bertrand and Desargus, may now perform on the harp any music composed for the piano, and may extemporise with the facility of the pianist.

“Our circle of friends is exceedingly agreeable. It consists of eminent artists, literary men, and politicians. The latter would perhaps weary us, if they were not obliged to talk on other subjects besides the affairs of Government, which we women do not understand. All we wish is to see France happy without caring for the means by which that happiness is brought about; that is the business of the magistrates who rule us, and the brave soldiers who defend us; ours is the agreeable task of encouraging them to fulfil their duty by our approval, and that we do very readily, I assure you.

“As it has always been the custom, my dear Eugène, for ladies to crown conquerors, we have a thousand surprises in store for you against your return, and we are all preparing for you such gifts as were formerly lavished on the *preux chevaliers* of old. In exchange we expect you to bring home abundance of Egyptian antiquities, to prove that you thought of us amidst the great monuments which surround you. A token of recollection from such scenes of glory will possess inexpressible charms, and I know you are too gallant to neglect these little compliments to the lady of your heart, from whom I shall hear of them.

“I know I cannot always hold the first place in your affections; this is not agreeable to me, but it cannot be otherwise. And to convince you that I

submit to this hard necessity, I will tell you that *she* is well, that she talks only of you, and that she takes no interest in any conversation of which Egypt is not the subject. Here is consolation for you in your absence. As for me, I think I shall never have patience to wait for your return, and if you know at what port of France you are likely to land, it will be kind to inform me of it, that I may go and watch the vessel as it nears the shore. What happiness will that be!

“I was lately at Tillet, and Madame de Montesson inquired after you with a degree of interest which makes me love her more than ever. This, I am sure, will be very gratifying to you, for she is a person of no ordinary stamp, and her good opinion, which is always the result of reflection and sound judgment, is a flattering compliment.

“Tell me everything that concerns yourself, Bonaparte, and your friends. Only conceal from me anything which may lead me to suspect you have enemies among your own countrymen. It would be adding fresh pangs to the grief of separation from you, to make me fear quarrels which, though they spring up in trifles, often end tragically. I wish to persuade myself that your adopted father is surrounded only by admirers, and you only by protectors and advisers.

“Adieu, my dear son! I know it is useless to

repeat that my affection for you exceeds all bounds. Of that you are well assured; yet it affords me so much pleasure to dwell on the subject, and I know you will excuse my tediousness. So, my dear Eugène, receive a thousand assurances of your mother's love, and all the kisses she encloses in her letter. Write to me as often as you can; it will never be often enough.

"P. S. — I have received the shawls. They may be very costly, but I really think them ugly. Their chief merit is the lightness of their texture. I doubt whether the fashion will take. However, their rarity and, above all, their warmth, sufficiently recommend them to me."

I know not the names of the young gentlemen who were so eager to pay homage to Mdlle. Hortense de Beauharnais. The prospect of her future destiny was brilliant, and she was surrounded by a crowd of admirers, all zealously endeavouring to please her; but encouragement was given to none. When I saw her for the first time, which was six months before her marriage, no individual was yet pointed out as having fixed the choice of this young lady, whom so many parents anxiously wished to make their daughter-in-law. Since then it has been reported that she had a partiality for Général P——, but at that time no such thing was mentioned, and I believe there is no truth in the story.

Général P—— was very handsome, but the other members of his family were far from possessing a like advantage. The following anecdote of their remarkable plainness may be related here.

They were emigrants at the same period as my family. One evening the Duc de Fleuri, who in despite of the privations of exile was full of life and gaiety, visited the Princesse de Vaudemont after an absence of some months. He was acquainted with old M. de P——, and after saluting him said :

“ Pray, who is this horrible-looking woman sitting beside the charming Madame de Fougy, as it were for the purpose of producing a contrast ? ”

“ That lady is my wife,” answered M. de P——, with rather a lengthened countenance.

“ Oh, no ! ” replied the Duke, “ I know Madame de P—— very well ” (it was to her, however, his question referred) ; “ she is very agreeable. . . . I mean that one on the other side of Madame de Fougy . . . she is really frightful.”

“ Ah ! that is my sister.”

“ Well, my dear P——, this is quite distressing ; there is no extricating oneself from such an embarrassment with you, for there never was so extraordinary a family.”

Madame Bonaparte received two cashmere shawls, which were sent to her by her husband. Mesdames Bourienne, Hamelin, and Visconti also received similar

presents. At that time these ladies only wore the shawls because they were uncommon, and they were by many considered frightful and not fit to be adopted. However, the ugly shawls, as they were called, soon became fashionable, and it would have been a dreadful misfortune to a lady to be without one.

The Empress Josephine had quite a passion for shawls, and I question whether any collection of them was ever as valuable as hers. At Navarre she had one hundred and fifty, all extremely beautiful and high priced. She sent designs to Constantinople, and the shawls made after these patterns were as beautiful as they were valuable. Every week M. Lenormant came to Navarre and sold her whatever he could obtain that was curious in this way. I have seen white shawls covered with roses, bluebells, parroquets, peacocks, etc., which I believe were not to be met with anywhere else in Europe; they were valued at 15,000 and 20,000 francs each.

The Empress also wore cashmere dresses. One day M. Portalès, after admiring a dress of that kind very much, observed that the pattern would do well for a waistcoat. Her Majesty immediately took a pair of scissors, cut up her dress, and gave pieces to MM. Portalès, de Turpin, and de Vieil-Castel. She retained for herself only the body which, worn with the white petticoat below it, set off her fine form to greater advantage than before. Thus what was with

her only a spontaneous act of kindness might have been mistaken for studied coquetry ; for I never saw any dress become her better than this impromptu spencer.

The shawls were at length sold by auction at Malmaison, at a rate much below their value. All Paris went to the sale, but I stayed away. It would have been extremely painful to me to look on while avaricious dealers were contending for the spoils with which I had once seen the Empress adorned. I cannot conceive why it was determined to dispose in this manner of things which ought to have been divided among her children, to whom all that belonged to such a mother must have been invaluable.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO THE MINISTER OF POLICE.

M. Thuriot.—**MM. de Villeneuve, and Coster-Saint-Victor.**
—**Madame Coster Presents a Painting to the Consul.**—
Sharp Reply of a Counsellor on the Trial of the Persons
Implicated in the Conspiracy of the Infernal Machine.

“**CITIZEN MINISTER:** While the shock of the awful event which has just happened is still fresh upon my mind,* I cannot help feeling distressed and uneasy beyond measure at the prospect of the dreadful punishments which must await the perpetrators of the crime, who belong, I am told, to families with whom I have formerly been in habits of intimacy. I shall be appealed to by mothers, sisters, and disconsolate wives, and I shall be grieved at my inability to grant all the favours I would wish.

“The Consul’s mercy is great, and his attachment to me extreme. I know this; but the crime is of so black a dye that it will be deemed necessary to make awful examples. It is not the head of the Government only whose life was endangered, and this

* The explosion of the infernal machine, on the 3rd Nivose, is here alluded to.

circumstance will render him severe, I fear inflexible. I conjure you, therefore, citizen Minister, to prevent, as far as lies in your power, the investigations being pushed to the extreme for the discovery of the accomplices of this odious plot. France has been too long appalled by executions; let her not shudder at new ones. Is it not more politic to endeavour to pacify the public mind than to irritate it by fresh horrors? In a word, when the ringleaders of the conspiracy are apprehended, should not the severity of justice yield to the gentler emotions of pity towards the subordinate agents, who have probably been misled by dangerous sophistry and erroneous opinions?

“The Consul, who was but the other day invested with power, ought, methinks, to endeavour to conciliate friends rather than to triumph over slaves. That punishment should attend crime is, alas! necessary; but be merciful, and let the number of your pardons exceed your condemnations. Befriend the unfortunate who by timely repentance may expiate at least a part of their crime.

“Having myself narrowly escaped the dangers of the Revolution, it is perfectly natural that I should feel interested in behalf of those whose lives may be spared without danger to the existence of my husband, which is so precious to me and to France. This it is which makes me anxious you should draw a distinction between the instigators of the crime and

those who, either from imbecility or fear, have been induced to participate in it. As a woman, a wife, and a mother, I must deeply feel the distress of those families who will appeal for my intercession.

“ Endeavour, citizen Minister, to diminish the number of victims. I can never turn a deaf ear to the cry of the distressed ; but on this occasion you can do infinitely more than I, and this consideration will, I am sure, excuse my importunity.

“ Rely on my sincere gratitude and acknowledgments.”

In the course of these Memoirs I have mentioned the efforts made by Josephine to save many of the individuals tried before the tribunal of which M. Thuriot presided as judge. She succeeded in obtaining the commutation of the punishment of death to which MM. de Polignac, de Rivière, and Charles d’Hozier were sentenced ; but she was not so fortunate in getting the Consular clemency extended to the most guilty of the parties concerned, nine of whom, I believe, expiated their crime in the Place de Grève. They all evinced extreme fortitude, especially MM. de Villeneuve and Coster-Saint-Victor, who were celebrated for their courage in the field, and the coolness and intrepidity with which they had managed several hazardous enterprises at different times entrusted to them. They were exceedingly

handsome men, and displayed remarkable talent on their trial.

Madame Coster, the aunt of M. Coster-Saint-Victor, who had acquired great reputation as a flower painter, addressed a petition to Madame Bonaparte, who evinced the activity she was ever wont to exert when her object was to assist the unfortunate. On those occasions her Creole indolence entirely forsook her. Unhappily she had not sufficient influence to stop the torrent of tears she saw flowing; she could only soothe and console the distress which she had no power to prevent.

Madame Coster, knowing the Consul's passion for the fine arts, conceived the idea of presenting him with one of her best productions; in the hope that, moved by the distress of a woman of talent, who was about to see severed the only tie which attached her to life, he would grant the pardon she so earnestly solicited. The painting was sent, admired and accepted; but young Coster was nevertheless led to the scaffold, where he nobly ended a life devoted to the Bourbons.

Many incidents connected with this ever memorable conspiracy added interest to the trials. I have in the course of these Memoirs related two.* The following circumstance was the general talk of Paris for some days :

* The anecdote of *Maréchal Macdonald* and the extempore couplet composed by *M. de Rivière*.

M. Thuriot, they say, shewed himself so very unfavourable to the accused, that it was easy to perceive he wished for their condemnation. He assumed towards them a sternness of demeanour, which had the effect of confusing them in their replies to his insidious questions. Georges Cadoudal behaved with singular presence of mind, and in his replies to the President he never failed to call him by his name, which he converted into *Tue-Roi*.* This excited a great sensation in the court, and the President was so disconcerted by it that for several days he got some one else to take his place.

It is said that M. Thuriot declared it would be necessary, as a matter of policy, to condemn all the persons arraigned on these trials, not excepting Moreau; upon which a counsellor in court replied: "If you condemn them, who will pardon you?"

I have forgotten the name of this noble-minded man, who, at the risk of losing his place, expressed an opinion in opposition to the sentiments of the Government. I am sorry I am not able to record his name here.

Fouché was believed to be averse to the measures of severity adopted. On this memorable occasion, however, the opinions of others prevailed over his, which was in favour of a sentence of perpetual imprisonment.

* M. Thuriot voted in the most positive way for the death of the King.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO THE COMTESSE DE ———.

Mdlle. ——— Is Refused the Situation of Dame du Palais. —
Madame de Montesson. — Mdles. de Valence and Ducrest.

“ I CANNOT, my dear madame, request the Emperor to give your daughter the appointment you seek. He has positively declared his determination to have none but married ladies about the Court. Madame de Montesson can tell you that she solicited a similar favour for Mdlle. de Valence without success; the place of Dame du Palais is promised her *as soon as she shall be married*. The friendship which both the Emperor and I cherish for Madame de Montesson suggested to us this mode of eluding the difficulty.

“ I can only express by my regret the pleasure I should have experienced in complying with your wishes.”

The Emperor objected to the appointment of young unmarried ladies to situations about the Court for fear of any renewal of the irregularities which characterised the conduct of the Maids of Honour at the Court

of Louis XIV. Mdle. d'Arberg was, I believe, the only exception to this rule.* Her mother, if I recollect right, being at the time Dame du Palais, obtained permission to have her daughter with her.

Madame de Montesson, as stated in the letter quoted above, had obtained the promise that Mdle. de Valence should enter the Empress's service on her marriage. She had likewise obtained for her niece the promise of the situation of Maid of Honour to the Queen of Spain on a similar condition.

However, the sudden death of Madame de Montesson deranged all the views of her family.

Mdle. de Valence, about twenty years ago, married Comte de Celles, formerly a French prefect, and now Ambassador from the King of the Netherlands at the Court of Rome. His wife some months since fell a victim to an affection of the lungs from which she had long suffered.

The Comtesse de Celles was a woman of exalted and cultivated mind, and her society was courted by men of intelligence. Her talents and virtues drew around her a numerous circle of friends. She filled a situation in the household of the Duchesse d'Orléans, by whom her loss was deeply regretted, a circum-

* Mdle. Guillebeau was afterwards appointed reader to the Empress ; but that was a post very inferior to that of Maid of Honour. Had it not been for the high favour Mesdames Gazani and Guillebeau enjoyed, they would not have been admitted to the Court circle. It was in direct opposition to etiquette.

stance which speaks volumes in her praise. She was a granddaughter of the Comtesse de Genlis and sister to the Comtesse Gérard, wife of the celebrated general of that name.

LETTER XXXV.

TO MADAME ———.

“I AM sorry, my dear friend, that my wishes cannot be fulfilled, as you and my other old friends imagine they can, and who seem to think that if I do not see them it is because I have forgotten them. Alas! no, on the contrary, my memory is more tenacious than I wish. The more I think of what I am, the more I am mortified at not being able to obey the dictates of my heart. The Empress of France is the veriest slave in the Empire, and she cannot acquit the debt which Madame de Beauharnais owes. This renders me miserable, and it will explain why you are not near me; why I do not see Madame Tallien; why, in short, many of my former friends would be unknown to me, but that my memory is faithful.

“The Emperor, displeased at the prevailing laxity of morals, and anxious to check its progress, wishes that his palace should present an example of virtuous and religious conduct. Anxious to consolidate the religion which he has restored, and having no power to alter laws to which he has given his assent, he has

determined to exclude from Court all persons who have taken advantage of the law of divorce. He has given this promise to the Pope, and he cannot break it. This reason alone has obliged him to refuse the favour I solicited of having you about me. His refusal afflicts me, but it is too positive to admit of any hope of its being retracted.

“I must therefore, my friend, renounce all idea of the pleasure I had promised myself of having you constantly near me, when I should have made you forget the Empress in the society of the faithful friend. Alas! my high station precludes me from exercising my own will. Pity me, and preserve for me that friendship, the recollection of which is as great a blessing to me now as its reality was a consolation to me in captivity. How often do I look back with regret to the little gloomy chamber which we shared together. There, at least, I had a friend who sincerely loved me!”

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE COMTESSE ———.

Princesse Stephanie. — Mdles. de Mackau, Gruau, and Bourjoli. — MM. de Foncier, Philidor, and Pradher.

“I SEND you, my dear friend, a trifle which will serve to prove that I do not cease to think of you. When Foncier brought it in, I was pleased with it at first glance, and fancied how well it would become your beautiful neck. Accept it, then, as the pledge of an attachment of which you ought not to doubt when you think of your kindness to me at a time when I had nothing but your friendship to console me.

“My high rank is a source of gratification to me only when it affords me the pleasure of serving my old friends. Your happy lot deprives me of the happiness of being useful to you, for you have nothing to wish for. I therefore console myself for my inability to serve you by seizing every opportunity of doing what is agreeable to you.

“My dear Stephanie,* whom the Emperor has adopted, is to be immediately united to a German Prince. His name is as yet a secret; but when I am

* The Princess of Baden.

at liberty to disclose it you shall be the first to know it.

“You know my attachment to my niece, and you may imagine the happiness I experience in seeing hers secured. Her unambitious character makes her regard this marriage with some degree of pain, because it will remove her from me and her other relations. By and by she will taste the purest joy this world affords, that of making others happy.

“You remember, my dear, we found means to taste this pleasure in our captivity when we used to share with the poor prisoners what we received from the bounty of our friends! . . .

“The wish to be kind is all that is necessary; we may always find means to be so; and Stephanie is preëminently endowed with this disposition.

“We are now fully engaged in ordering the finery necessary for the adornment of a bride. I am delighted at the Emperor’s liberality towards my little favourite. She is, I believe, less happy than I am at the costly presents she receives; and her only consolation on quitting France is the privilege of taking along with her some of her young companions.* By

* The Princess took with her M^lles. de Mackau, Gruau, and Bourjoli. I have already mentioned that M^lle. Mackau had quitted Her Royal Highness to enter the service of the Empress, who arranged a marriage for her with Général Wattier de Saint-Alphonse. The Princess of Baden was reluctant to part with her, but she yielded to the wishes of Josephine and of the young lady herself, who was anxious to return to her father in Paris. Her Royal Highness consoled herself for the loss of her com-

the bye, since you wish something to be done for your *protégée*, I can get her an appointment with Stephanie, who, I assure you, will be a better mistress than I. Tell Mdle. ——— this, and persuade her to accept what I am sure will be advantageous to her.

“Farewell, my dear, I am told Foncier * is waiting. You see there are duties to which even friendship must be sacrificed. You, I know, will pardon me for thus abruptly breaking off my letter, in consideration of an object of such importance. The pleasure of writing to you has made me overcome my natural indolence, and dispense with the services of Deschamps. A third party is always unwelcome between friends like you and me. I am sure you think so.

“Adieu! my dear, and be assured that whether Empress or prisoner, I remain your ever faithful

“JOSEPHINE.”

panion by redoubling, if possible, her kindness to the two young ladies who remained with her. Mdle. Bourjoli has made an advantageous marriage. I have not heard what has become of Mdle. Gruau, but the amiable character of the Princess affords no room to doubt the happiness of any one in whose welfare she took an interest.

* A celebrated jeweller, then no less patronised than Philidor and Pradher now are.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MADAME DE M——.

“NOT having it in my power, *dearest mamma*, to present to you in person my compliments and good wishes, I console myself from this disappointment by feeling assured that you are perfectly convinced of their sincerity. I send you two vases, which will occasionally recall me to your mind, although the flowers that ornament them are far from rivalling those you have painted on my beautiful white marble table. I take all the care of it which is due to anything coming from you, and once more return you thanks for the gift.

“Maréchal Berthier told me that he was going to dine with you to-day. He is greatly attached to you; I therefore give him the commission to say how much I regret not being at liberty to follow my inclination, which would, as a matter of course, take me to Romainville and to the bosom of your family and numerous friends, foremost amongst whom I have the presumption to place myself, although I can seldom participate in the enjoyment they derive from your conversation, instructive and useful as it is to many, and captivating to all.

“The poor lady you have recommended to me is contented with the trifling situation which has been granted to her son. This will afford leisure to look out for a better one. Rest assured I shall not forget it.

“Pray return my best thanks to your ladies for the handsome works I have received from them.

“There is no approaching you without becoming a gainer by the contact. Why, then, am I so far away ?

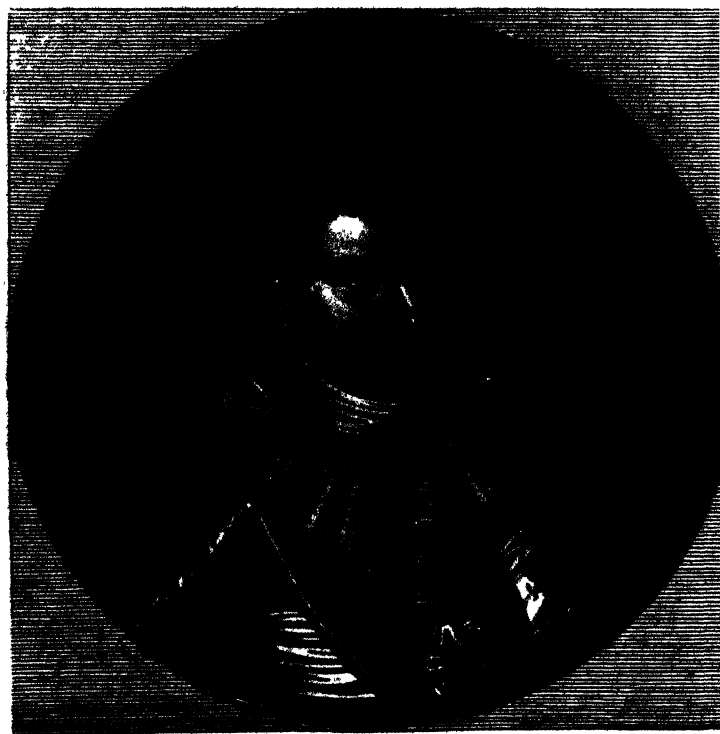
“Farewell, *dearest mamma* ; continue to love me and to aid me with your advice ; for I find it extremely difficult to discharge the duties of my station in such a manner as to give satisfaction to every one, and yet I could wish to accomplish so desirable an object.”

Madame de Montesson, the lady to whom this letter was addressed, received on the day of her festival two magnificent vases of Sèvres porcelain, as a present from Josephine. Madame de Montesson was then residing at Romainville, where the old and new nobility vied with each other in paying their court to her. The society was enlivened by a continued round of charming fêtes, and the severities of winter did not check the desire of enjoying her delightful society.

Maréchal Berthier was one of the most assiduous

Berthier

Photo-etching after painting by Mlle. Noireterre



in his attentions. He gave a dinner to Madame de Montesson at the Raincy on the day of his appointment to the rank of a French marshal. Madame Visconti, who was delighted at the new dignity conferred upon the man whom she still hoped to call her husband, constantly gave him the name of the *bachelor marshal*, fancying, no doubt, that in a short time it would no longer be applicable to him. He had, in fact, to drop it very soon afterwards, in consequence of his marriage with the Princess of Bavaria.

I recollect that Madame de Montesson, being desirous of making a present to the Empress which might be acceptable to her, although of no intrinsic value, set to work in various ways all the ladies who habitually resided with her. One embroidered a *sultana*, the others either knit purses, strung necklaces, or made a bouquet of artificial flowers, etc., and the whole collection was sent to the Tuileries, where it was, perhaps, more admired than the most brilliant dresses, so complete was the surfeit felt for objects of mere splendour; the plainness of the gift formed its chief ornament. A table-cover, painted in oil, was the production of Madame de Montesson herself, and was added to the *sultana* above mentioned.

Madame de Latour, aunt of M. de Polignac, contributed the greatest share towards the gift. Completely ruined by the Revolution, she had no other means of subsistence than what she derived from her

exertions and those of her daughter. Those two ladies were never heard to complain. On the contrary, by her cheerful disposition and amiable manners they promoted the happiness enjoyed by the society at Romainville, where they resided the greater part of the year.

The commutation of the sentence passed upon their nephews inspired with the liveliest gratitude two hearts accessible to the most generous feelings. And those ladies eagerly sought an opportunity of expressing to their benefactress the sense they entertained of her generosity. They were subsequently appointed *ladies* in the establishment of St. Denis.

Whether they still remain there is more than I can pretend to say; but their condition is probably far different at the present day from what it was during the period I am speaking of. Their family has been reinstated into Court favour, and have recovered their property, which there can be no doubt of their sharing with their less fortunate relatives.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO MADAME ———.

Mesdames d' Arberg, d' Audenarde, de Vieil-Castel, de Colbert, de Rémusat, and de Segur. — MM. Bonplan, Deschamps, and Horeau. — Comte Octave de Segur.

“MADAME: I have been informed how kindly you have participated in the deep afflictions which overwhelmed me a twelvemonth ago,* and my heart, whilst a prey to the bitterest sorrow, derived from the constancy of your attachment a consolation to which it was not insensible, but which is now the more welcome as my mind has recovered some composure. I have received with feelings of gratitude the letter you were pleased to address me, and you will ascribe my delay in answering it to my being wholly wrapped up in my sorrows.

“I am much affected at your only recalling our former intimacy to my mind when I am fallen from that height which excited so much envy. Rest assured, madame, that you were never forgotten for a single moment by one who could have wished to attach you to her person, had she not known that

* A year had elapsed since the Emperor's divorcing from her.

your inclination coincided with the duty which compelled you to reside in the country near an infirm husband who had resolved never to revisit Paris.

“You are now free from this restraint; I am also at liberty to surround myself with persons of my own choice; shall we not both take advantage of this opportunity to meet again? The education of your daughter may be better completed at Malmaison than anywhere else. If you consent to accept a place of Dame du Palais, we shall meet never more to part.

“The Emperor, who evinces for me the utmost consideration and attachment, allows me the selection of the persons who are to compose my household; it rests, therefore, with yourself whether or no you will raise any obstacle to the wishes I am forming that we may once more meet. We have both experienced such severe reverses of fortune that we cannot but feel a kindred desire of reposing our sorrows in each other's breasts. You will listen to the narrative of my troubles, which are far greater than you can suspect them to be, and from your description of the prolonged sufferings of your husband, which caused you to suffer even more keenly than he did, of the cares you bestowed upon him, I shall derive the sincerest of all pleasures — that of admiring the object of my unfeigned regard.

“You will find here the most amiable and delightful society; nothing can exceed the kindness of dis-

position of Mesdames d'Arberg, d'Audenarde, de Vieil-Castel, and de Colbert; their lives have also been chequered by misfortunes; they will accordingly make allowances for your habitual melancholy, and abstain from forcing you to partake of pleasures from which your heart might recoil. Mesdames de Rémusat and de Segur will create a distraction to your grief by the charm of their playful wit; and you may converse with Bonplan, Deschamps, and Horeau respecting subjects on which you delight to converse, and with which you are so familiar. Some young ladies in whom I take a lively interest will study with your amiable daughter. She will promote their instruction by imparting to them what she has acquired, and will receive in return that assistance in music and dancing which she could obtain but imperfectly in the château of her excellent father.

“The combination of comforts which my residence will present to you ought to fix your determination; but I so far venture to rely upon your affection as to feel satisfied that the certainty of contributing to my happiness in this retreat will operate more powerfully upon you than every other consideration.

“I have hitherto been afforded the strongest proofs of the general interest taken in my welfare. I have been visited by all the Court of Napoleon, who has constantly expressed the *wish* that I should on every occasion be treated as an Empress; there is, besides,

felt the utmost curiosity to discover by personal observation with what degree of fortitude I bear my new condition. When the Emperor's courtiers shall have repeatedly told him that they have paid a visit to Malmaison, when they shall have carefully watched my countenance and scrutinised my deportment, they will cease to travel a distance of eight leagues for the mere purpose of visiting a person who no longer possesses any influence; I shall then be left to the undisturbed enjoyment of the society of my true friends, and must, therefore, *insist* upon adding you to their number.

"The word *insist* has unguardedly escaped me; you must ascribe it to an old habit which I shall endeavour to correct; there is one, however, which I cannot consent to relinquish — I allude to my sincere affection for you. Come, then, I beseech you, and rely upon the attachment of

"JOSEPHINE."

I never met at Malmaison any one whose position bore the least analogy to that of Madame de ———, to whom the above letter appears to have been addressed. This lady will, no doubt, have preferred the solitude of retirement rather than expose a daughter, the object of her solicitude, to the dangers of a Court where she would have derived great enjoyment from the society composing it, although not

without some drawbacks to its pleasures. The correct judgment of so tender a parent will have suggested to her that a quiet course of life, when surrounded with devoted and grateful friends, and beyond the reach of envy and calumny, afforded far better prospects of happiness.

I have already had occasion to advert to the persons named in Josephine's letter. I have paid every homage to the wit of Madame de Rémusat, to her solid information, and especially to her gentleness of manners; nevertheless, I feel so much pleasure in holding up to admiration *a woman graced with every perfection*, that I gladly seize this opportunity of repeating that no one ever combined in her person such powers of pleasing with so total an absence of pretensions; a more irreproachable conduct with less intolerance and severity towards others. She gave advice with meekness whenever it was solicited, but was never forward in tendering it; I never once heard her criticise or blame any one. Some idea may, however, be formed of her disposition by any one acquainted with her amiable sister,* who forcibly recalls her to mind.

The Comtesse de Segur possessed great personal attractions, which were much heightened by a countenance strongly expressive of melancholy.

She had not for ten years received the least tidings

* The Comtesse de Nansouty.

of her husband, who had suddenly disappeared without any clue being afforded that might lead to a discovery of what had become of him. The most active search was unattended with any result, and all his family bewailed his death, although without any certainty that he had ceased to live.

Comte Octave de Segur, the son, nephew, and brother of men alike distinguished by their superior wit and the rank they have held in the walks of literature, was himself a man of no common stamp.

To a heart susceptible of the most ardent passions, and an imagination overstepping all bounds, are to be ascribed the sorrows which befell him and all those who were attached to him. Deeply in love with his wife, he fancied he did not receive from her a corresponding return ; so that, unable to endure a frigidity of deportment which was intolerable to him, he determined to fly forever from the presence of this idolised wife. He disappeared without reflecting that he was about to plunge a wife, a father, a mother, a brother, and three children into the deepest grief. He left them in this state of despair *during a period of fourteen years*, without once writing to them, and enlisted as a common hussar in a regiment on the eve of marching to join in the first campaign in Germany. Whilst courting death at every step, he reluctantly found that glory alone awaited him ; and rising from rank to rank on the very field of battle, he attained

the post of lieutenant, I believe, and was decorated with the cross reserved for gallant men.

Disappointed at this series of successes which were foreign from his ambition, and compelled to admit that the enemy's shot could not reach him, though ever foremost in courting them, he at last felt the want of revisiting that afflicted family which was ever present to his mind ; he returned to France, and wrote a letter to his wife expressive of his regret at having occasioned her so much sorrow. He told her that the progress of age and the fatigues of war had calmed the warmth of his imagination and of his heart ; that he could thenceforth rest contented with a sincere attachment, and in short, that in a few hours he would join the objects of his dearest affections.

He accordingly returned to the society of those who were tenderly attached to him ; but so far from delighting in the enjoyment of his restored happiness, he appeared dissatisfied and gloomy, and was unable to overcome that suspecting disposition which he represented himself as having entirely shaken off. In vain were the most affectionate attentions lavished upon him ; he once more disappeared ! . . . This time, alas ! there was not left the slightest hope of his again returning to his family ! The unhappy man drowned himself ! . . .

As I was never on terms of intimacy with Comte de Segur's family, some trifling inaccuracy may pos-

sibly have crept into my narrative; but this tragical story is in the main in perfect accordance with the truth; I do not even think that I have erred in the details, though I cannot altogether vouch for every part of them.

Comte Octave de Segur wrote a work entitled "*Flore des Demoiselles*," an instructive and entertaining book which had a great run. All kinds of literary productions were destined to emanate from the pen of a Segur! *

His eldest son was married to Mdle. Rostopschin, daughter of the celebrated general of that name.

* Comte Octave de Segur was the son of Comte de Segur, Grand Master of the Ceremonies under the Empire (who has written such interesting "Memoirs"), and nephew to the Vicomte de Segur, who had the character of being formerly the most amiable coxcomb of the French Court, the same who published, twenty-eight years ago, a work entitled "*Les Femmes*." Lastly, he was brother to Général Comte Philippe de Segur, the author of the "*Campagne de Russie*," an admirable and imposing narrative of one of the most memorable epochs of our history. Few families can exhibit such titles to the gratitude of posterity.

LETTER XXXIX.

THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE TO NAPOLEON.

Details Respecting the Establishment at Navarre. — Mesdames d'Audenarde, d'Andlau. — The Abbés de Saint-Albin and Saint-Farre. — The Dowager Duchesse d'Orléans.

“ NAVARRE.

“SIRE: I have received this morning the amiable note you wrote to me at the moment of your departure for Saint-Cloud, and hasten to return thanks for the truly considerate and friendly expressions which it contains. I have been rather disappointed at its only reaching me a fortnight after my arrival at this place, persuaded as I was that your attachment would suggest to you to console me under a separation rendered necessary for the happiness of both. I almost feel a pleasure in my retirement when I consider the interest you still take in whatever concerns me.

“After having experienced the delight of a requited love, and the sufferings to which the loss of that love has left me a prey, indulged without restraint in the enjoyments conferred by the highest rank, and in the happiness of listening to the enthusiastic praises bestowed upon the object of my

affection, what else can I now wish for than the calm of retirement? To what illusions can I further yield? They have all vanished from my sight the instant I had to renounce the possession of your heart. Accordingly, I no longer hold to life except by the sentiments I entertain for you and for my children, the possibility of still doing good, and the conviction that you are happy. Do not, then, pity me for being at a distance from a Court for which you are mistaken in supposing I can feel the least regret.

“Surrounded by friends who are much attached to me, and free to indulge my taste for the fine arts, I give the preference to Navarre over every other residence, as I enjoy here the society of the former without restraint, and meditate a variety of plans calculated to improve the latter, and to embellish the estates which your bounty has assigned to me. There is much to be done at Navarre, where traces of ruin and desolation are met with at every step; it shall be my endeavour to repair them, so that nothing may remain to recall to mind the frightful calamities of which your genius has nearly obliterated the remembrance. Whilst engaged in repairing whatever the most savage barbarity has endeavoured to destroy, I shall at the same time spread cheerfulness and comfort around me, and the blessings of the poor will be far more grateful to my heart than the false adulations of courtiers.

“I have already written my sentiments to you concerning the public functionaries of this department; but my praises of the worthy Bishop* have fallen short of his deserts. I hear every day some fresh anecdote concerning him, which greatly enhances my opinion of a man who combines the most enlightened benevolence with the most amiable accomplishments. He will undertake to distribute the alms which I wish to reserve for the town of Evreux; and as he frequently visits the habitations of the poor I have the conviction that they will be well applied.

“I cannot sufficiently thank you, Sire, for having left me at liberty to select the persons of my household, who all contribute their share towards the enjoyment of a delightful society. The only thing that distresses me is that you should require a rigid etiquette in dress, which operates as a drawback to the charms of a country life.

“You are apprehensive of any deviation from the respect due to the rank I still retain, if I permit the slightest falling off in the costume of the gentlemen of my household; but I conceive you are in error when you suppose that any one could forget for a single moment the consideration hitherto shewn to a woman who was formerly your wife. The respect which is felt for you, and the attachment evinced towards me (the sincerity of which I have no reason

* M. Bourlier, Bishop of Evreux.

to call in question), will always spare me the necessity of reminding any one of a circumstance which you desire shall never be forgotten. I value my having been selected for your partner as a far prouder title than that which I derive from having been crowned; it will amply suffice to immortalise my name.

“I am in hourly expectation of seeing Eugène, and the more anxious to meet him as he will, no doubt, bring me some fresh proof of your kind remembrance; I may then freely indulge in questions respecting various matters which I am anxious to be made acquainted with, though it would be as unbecoming in me to make inquiries of you as it would be in you to answer them. My daughter’s visit will be delayed some time longer; her health does not yet allow her to undertake the journey. I beseech you, Sire, to impress her with the danger of trifling with her health; tell her that since I am to remain here she ought at least to spare me the mortification and distress which prey upon me whenever she is in pain. I am alarmed beyond measure at her increased sufferings, and exceedingly anxious that Corvisart should write to me without disguise his opinion concerning her.

“The arrival of Mesdames (Charles) d’ Audenarde and d’ Andlau, with their husbands, has brought an accession to my society. I also receive visits from sev-

eral of the inhabitants of Evreux and of the vicinity, and am much pleased with their manners, and with the admiration they express for you, although you are aware I am rather difficult to please on these points; in short, I feel quite happy in the midst of my solitude, and request Your Majesty will dismiss the idea from your mind that there is no happiness beyond the precincts of a Court. You are the only object in it for whom I entertain any regret, since I shall be soon joined by my children, and am already surrounded by the few friends who have remained faithful to me. Continue to retain a kind recollection of your friend; give her the consolation of occasionally hearing from you that you still preserve that attachment for her which alone constitutes the happiness of her existence; repeat to her that you are happy; and rest assured that her future life will be as calm and peaceable as her past life was stormy and often embittered by the severest trials."

The Empress undertook, in fact, very considerable improvements in Navarre, and restored to that residence its former splendour. She cautiously avoided every tasteless ornament, but raised many plantations, caused the marshes to be dried up, public buildings to be erected, and by procuring occupation for the peasantry substituted a state of comfort for that frightful misery which prevailed in the province previously to

her taking up her residence in it. The roads of the Forest of Evreux, which were wholly inaccessible until the moment of her arrival, were converted into handsome avenues. Everything, in short, assumed a new aspect as soon as Her Majesty obtained the acquisition of the ancient domain of the Princes of the House of Bouillon, which had afterwards become the property of M. Roy,* by whom it was totally neglected, except in so far as it could be made to yield a higher income.

I have already observed that the Empress was constantly surrounded by the inhabitants of Evreux; many landed proprietors of the neighbourhood also came to pay their court to Her Majesty. Amongst the number were the Abbé de Saint-Albin † and Madame d'Ambert, who frequently called at the Palace of Navarre during the period of my visit.

Her Majesty delighted to converse with the former on the subject of the Dowager Duchesse d'Orléans and her daughter, for whom she felt the liveliest interest. She frequently inquired whether the pension assigned by the Government to those unfortunate Princesses was punctually paid, and whenever the

* The present Comte Roy, Minister of Finances.

† He was the natural son of His Highness, the Duc d'Orléans, grandfather to the present Duke. L'Abbé de Saint-Farre, brother to M. de Saint-Albin, was at that time in Spain, near Her Serene Highness, the Dowager Duchesse d'Orléans, who, although under the necessity of living with the strictest economy, contrived to make him a pension. This is an additional proof of the generosity of that Princess.

case required it she wrote to accelerate the transmission of their funds. These were the means by which she secured the public esteem ; such noble traits in her character will cause her name to be handed down to posterity as a model for female sovereigns to imitate.

Party spirit never stood in the way of her relieving the distressed ; she considered that the French had all an equal claim to her bounty, and was persuaded that as long as she had it in her power to indulge her inclination to be useful, they would cheerfully forgive her elevation to the highest rank.

LETTER XL.

THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE TO THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

Birth of the King of Rome.

“ NAVARRE.

“SIRE: Amidst the numerous congratulations which pour in upon you from all quarters of Europe, from every town in the French Empire, and every regiment in the army, is there a chance that the weak voice of a woman shall ever reach your ears? Will you deign to listen to her who so often held out the language of consolation to your heart when a prey to affliction, now that she has only to speak of the happiness which has crowned your most sanguine wishes? Having ceased to be your wife, shall I venture to congratulate you on your being a father? Unquestionably I will; for my heart can do full justice to your own, and you are no less acquainted with the working of mine; I can as well understand your sentiments as you can form an idea of those which I experience at this moment; and separated as we are, we are nevertheless united by that sympathy of feelings which no circumstance can affect.

King of Rome

Photo-etching from a rare print



“I could have wished to have been made acquainted by yourself with the birth of the King of Rome, and not by the courier from the Prefect, or by the report of the cannon fired at Evreux ; * but I am aware that you owe your first attention to the different corporations of the State, to the members of the Diplomatic Body, to your family, and, above all, to the happy Princess who has just realised your dearest hopes. She cannot bear you a more devoted attachment than I do ; but she has contributed more towards your happiness whilst securing that of France ; she has, therefore, the first claim to your affection and tenderness ; I, who was your companion only in times of trial and danger, must yield to the Empress Maria Louisa that place in your heart which belongs to her without a rival.

“It is only, therefore, when you shall have bestowed those attentions upon her which her condition requires, when you shall have embraced your son, that you will feel at leisure to write to your sincerest friend. I shall wait! . . .

* M. de Saint-Hilaire, the Emperor's page, came to Navarre, some time afterwards, with a letter from the Emperor Napoleon to the Empress Josephine. Previously to her being furnished with details respecting the health of the King of Rome, the Empress had repeatedly manifested in my presence her apprehension that the child would suffer from the effects of Maria Louisa's confinement, which had been of a most painful nature. She no sooner acquired a certainty that the Prince was in the best possible state of health, than she came to announce the circumstance to the company who had met in the salon, and gave vent to expressions of delight on the occasion, which I always considered as emanating from the heart.

Feeling, however, more rejoiced than any one else at the bare contemplation of your happiness, I must give vent to my sentiments; and I trust you will entertain no doubt of my sincerity when I assure you that, so far from regretting a sacrifice which was required by a consideration for the repose and welfare of all, I actually rejoice at having submitted to it, since I am the only sufferer. Let me recall this expression, for I cannot suffer if you are happy; and my only regret arises from a conviction that I have not yet done enough to prove how much I valued your affection.

“I am still without any information on the subject of Her Majesty’s health; but have sufficient reliance upon you, Sire, to feel assured that you will not be sparing of details relating to the important event which will be the means of perpetuating a name rendered illustrious by your noble achievements. Eugène and Hortense will, of course, write to communicate to me the glad tidings; but I wish to learn *from yourself* if your child promises to be strong, if he resembles his father, if I may one day look forward to the pleasure of seeing him; in short, I trust, Sire, you will evince a confidence in me the more unlimited as I feel myself entitled to it by the unbounded attachment I bear to you, an attachment which can only cease with my existence.”

LETTER XLI.

THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE TO THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON AT THE ISLAND OF ELBA.

“MALMAISON.

“SIRE: It is only from this moment that I am enabled to estimate in its fullest extent the misfortunes which befell us when the laws gave their sanction to our divorce, and feel the mortification of being prevented from acting any other part towards you than that of a friend who can do no more than bewail a calamity as great as it is unexpected.

“I do not condole with you on the loss of a throne, aware as I am from personal experience that it admits of consolation; but I am distressed beyond measure at the grief you must have experienced when taking leave of the old partners of your glory. You will not only have regretted your officers, but your soldiers also, whose countenances, names, and splendid achievements were so familiar to you, whom you often expressed your inability to reward because of their numbers. To tear yourself from such heroes

who are henceforward to be deprived of a chief who constantly shared their hardships, must have been for your heart an effort almost beyond endurance; this is the sorrow in which above all others I participate.

“ You will also have had to bewail the ingratitude and desertion of friends upon whom you were justified in placing the fullest reliance. Ah! Sire, why cannot I fly to your presence and prove to you that a state of exile is appalling to none but vulgar souls, and that misfortune, so far from lessening a sincere attachment, greatly adds to its warmth!

“ I was on the eve of quitting France on my way to share your exile, with the intention of devoting to you the remainder of an existence of which you so long promoted the happiness. One motive alone has kept me back; you will have no difficulty in guessing it.

“ Should I find that, contrary to all appearances, *I am the only one* anxious to fulfil a sacred duty, nothing shall prevent my repairing to the only spot where I can ever enjoy happiness, since I shall now have it in my power to console you when you are leading an isolated and unhappy life! Speak but the word, and I instantly proceed to join you.

“ Farewell, Sire! Whatever more I might add would be superfluous. It is no longer by mere words that you can receive proofs of the attachment you

have inspired, but with respect to actions I must have your previous consent.

“JOSEPHINE.”

“My residence of Malmaison has been respected ; the allied Sovereigns have evinced the highest consideration for me, but I heartily wish to quit the spot.”

LETTER XLII.

FROM THE EMPRESS TO THE EMPEROR.

The Emperor's Uneasiness concerning Josephine's Health. — Family Troubles. — Josephine's Determination. — The Queen of Naples. — Princess Borghèse. — King Joseph. — The Princess of Wales. — Her Extraordinary Conduct during Her Residence at Naples. — Present Made by Her to the Ladies of Honour in Attendance about Her Person. — Harp Given by Her to Madame d'Arincourt. — Princess Charlotte. — General Mourning at Her Death.

“THOUGH my illness has occasioned you some anxiety, it has not been attended with any serious consequences; and I am inclined to rejoice at the event, since it has procured me a note which evinces that your affectionate regard remains undiminished. I cannot adequately express how delighted I am to find that absence has not impaired that sentiment, notwithstanding the unceasing exertions made in order to induce you to forget me. This assurance of your attachment will contribute to strengthen my health which has already shewn signs of improvement.

“I am the more mortified at what you relate to me respecting your family troubles, as I cannot as heretofore adopt any means for dispelling them. I have

come to the firm resolution no longer to interfere in what concerns your sisters; and I apprehend that were I to attempt any infringement of that rule I should be a very unwelcome visitor amongst them. Were I to hazard any advice, in hopes of rendering them what they ought to be, I should rather exasperate than calm their feelings.

“I was never a favourite with those ladies, for whom I could not avoid feeling a lively interest, since your happiness depended upon their conduct. Envy and jealousy were, unfortunately, the only sentiments they could entertain for me; and now that I am fallen from a rank which gave them umbrage, they freely indulge in their ill humour at having been so long obliged to conceal those sentiments. I cannot but think you exaggerate their wrongs towards you; and your expectations at their hands are naturally commensurate with your affection for them. They bear you a sincere attachment, though without any infusion of that enthusiasm of which all your actions bear the stamp; neither are they fully sensible of the mortification you experience at any steps or actions on their part, which are often imposed upon them by their elevated rank.

“For instance, was not the Queen of Naples under the necessity of not only receiving the Princess of Wales when travelling through her dominions, but of paying her every mark of respect to which her rank

entitled her? You would have blamed the Queen had she acted otherwise, because Her Royal Highness was unhappy; this, in your estimation, gives a much higher claim to respect than the most illustrious birth.

“Why, then, should you feel indisposed against the Queen for having given a hospitable reception to an afflicted woman who was, perhaps, the victim of injustice and calumny? Separated from her husband, from a daughter in whom she delighted, had she not cause enough for sorrow? Was she to be denied the melancholy consolation of being surrounded with honours and attentions? Rest assured that the consideration shewn by the Queen to the Princess of Wales was not prompted by any desire to *mortify* you, but by the feeling of compassion entertained for a Princess who is banished from the kingdom where she ought to hold paramount sway. Do not suspect any political motive in all this, but place every reliance upon the Queen’s assurances on the subject. She is quick-minded and ambitious, but full of tenderness for you, and too proud of the title of your sister ever to do anything calculated to throw discredit upon it.

“With respect to Princesse Pauline, she is a pretty child whom we have all vied with each other in spoiling; we ought not, therefore, to wonder or complain at her giddiness; indulgence will have much

more effect upon her than severity, which the bare contemplation of her fascinating countenance is sufficient to disarm. You must carefully abstain from scolding her; a gentle remonstrance will be sufficient to operate a change.

“Joseph is under the necessity of consulting the feelings of the Spaniards; this will satisfactorily account for the apparent misunderstanding between you. Time will repair this evil by consolidating a power of which he is but just laying the foundations, and which had so many obstacles to contend with. I shall be anxious to learn from you that you are better pleased with your family; rest assured, Sire, that no one will more sincerely rejoice at the restoration of that harmony which should always subsist between you.

“Farewell, Sire; calm the flights of your imagination, but give a free vent to the feelings of your heart. I am proud of retaining that place in it which it is my anxious wish to preserve unimpaired, and which I shall hope to merit at all times by my unbounded attachment.

“JOSEPHINE.”

The Emperor was generally displeased with his family, for whom he had done so much, though he failed to satisfy their cravings. He was desirous of enforcing that submission from his sisters which they

were not always disposed to evince; and his wishes were no sooner resisted than he suspected their indifference, and frequently conversed with Josephine on this mortifying subject.

At the time when she was reigning Empress, she frequently restored harmony in a domestic circle too often agitated by the slightest preference shewn by its chief. The gentleness and engaging manners of the Empress generally succeeded in reconciling the pretensions and interest of all parties, and whenever she took part in those quarrels, she seldom failed in calming the feelings of every one, and giving general satisfaction. Ever since her divorce, she declined interfering in the discussions between the members of the Imperial Family, with whom she seldom held any intercourse.

The Princess of Wales sojourned for some time at Naples, and was received with great distinction by the Queen (Madame Murat), who ordered four of her Ladies of Honour to attend Her Royal Highness during her residence at Naples. I learnt from one of them that the conduct of the Princess was as remarkable at that period as it has since been unbecoming and improper.

Her Royal Highness attended the Court in the most fantastic style. Her ball dress generally consisted of a cambric gown and muslin turban, forming a most perfect contrast with the splendour of the

Queen, who, perhaps, overlooked this affected carelessness because she appeared to greater advantage near a Princess who so little attended to outward appearances. The latter gave a free loose to her conversation, reluctantly submitted to rules of etiquette, and gave indications of that improper conduct which was afterwards laid to her charge.

On quitting Naples, she returned many thanks to the ladies who had been in attendance about her person, and expressed her intention of leaving them a token of her remembrance by offering a present to each. She opened a large casket full of jewels, and presented them with earrings, clasps for waistbands, etc., topazes, emeralds, and sapphires of extraordinary sizes.

"As to you," said Her Royal Highness to the amiable Madame d'Arincourt,* "you play the harp in such perfection that I cannot do better than offer you mine, which is of no inconsiderable value. No ornaments could enhance the beauty of a countenance which nothing could tend to embellish, and your taste for the fine arts will, no doubt, induce you to prize this instrument far above any useless ornament. You will therefore oblige me by accepting this harp."

The meanness of the present made to Madame d'Arincourt created general mirth at her expense, as

* Sister-in-law of the Vicomte d'Arincourt, the author of so many celebrated novels.

it appeared, in fact, of much less value than what the other ladies had received. They went to the Court jeweller to procure fresh mountings for the jewels which were indifferently set; great, however, was their astonishment when they were told that they were a mere imitation! The Princess had presented them with *fine glass* ornaments * set in metal imitating the colour of vermillion.

This anecdote would suffice to portray the whimsical character of a woman whose least fault was that of a giddiness bordering upon extravagance; her greatest claim to the affection of the English (amongst whom she found many a talented and upright defender) was that which she derived from being the mother of the Princess Charlotte, the idol of the English nation, who were unanimous in the expression of their regret at her painful and premature death.

I visited England about this time, and had an opportunity of collecting certain details which satisfied me that the national spirit of the English will make them sacrifice their opinions and prejudices whenever the tranquillity of their country is threatened by any public calamity. At the death of the Princess Charlotte, *every one, without exception*, bore some token of grief. The poor wore black paper

* An English composition which imitates every colour of precious stones.

upon their clothes ; children were not allowed to play in the streets ; the theatres were closed, and the stage-coaches were covered with sable drapery ; in short, the emblem of death was to be seen in all directions ; and the tears which dropped from every eye, the praises uttered by every tongue, conveyed the idea that the whole population was united by kindred sentiments and opinions.

Nevertheless, there is nowhere to be found so determined an opposition to the Government, a more perfect liberty to manifest it, greater respect for royalty, and, generally speaking, less affection for the persons of the King and of his family, but death had just snatched away the Princess who was to inherit the throne ; her firm character, her enlightened mind, the dignified popularity of her manners, had held out the prospect of her becoming a mighty Queen, and from that moment all party distinctions were blended. All united in deploring the loss of the charming Princess who had been so unexpectedly torn from them ; all joined with the King, her father, in bewailing her untimely end.

LETTER XLIII.

FROM THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE TO THE EMPEROR.

M. Pierlot. — Josephine's Anxiety to Make Her Will. — The Emperor Opposes Her Wish. — The King and Queen of Naples. — M. Horeau. — Present Made to Him by the Empress. — He Does Not Avail Himself of It. — The Comtesse d' Arberg.

“SIRE: Your considerate kindness towards me gives you an undoubted claim to exercise a full control in whatever concerns my household, and to regulate any augmentations, retrenchments, and alterations you think proper. I do not, therefore, attempt to alter your determination in respect to the accident which has befallen M. Pierlot; * knowing, however, as I do, his strict integrity, his devoted attachment to me, I may be allowed to remove, if possible, the prejudices against him which will be attempted to instil into your mind by persons who are ambitious of an honourable and lucrative employment. The place can be granted only to a trustworthy man; this is the very reason which makes me so desirous

* M. Pierlot, Chief Superintendent of Her Majesty's Household, had just become a bankrupt.

of preserving it to one whose character stands unimpeached, as there can be no doubt that the deranged state of M. Pierlot's affairs is to be ascribed to losses which it was beyond his power to avert. I am confident he will pay all his debts, for I believe him honest in the strictest acceptation of the term.

"Would it not then be possible, Sire, to avoid replacing him? I should find it advantageous for my interests to retain near my person a man who has at all times done me faithful service; nor do I think that an unfortunate accident should be visited with dismissal from employment, a measure of severity which could only be warranted by a dishonourable act.

"Previously, Sire, to adopting a determination calculated to destroy the happiness of a family to which I am much attached, I beseech you to make every possible inquiry concerning M. Pierlot, and if you should discover no circumstance rendering it indispensable to remove him from his place, I trust you will yield to my request that he may not be disturbed in the possession of it.

"The last time you condescended to visit Malmaison, I ventured to speak to you of my anxiety to make a will; this would be the means of securing the independence of the persons to whom I am attached, and whose zeal in my service gives them a claim to my grateful recollection.

“By confiding my last intentions to the august protection of Your Majesty, I should feel assured of their being carried into effect, and should at the same time dismiss from my mind all apprehension of being called away from the world without having done the good which I meditated to accomplish. You prevented me, Sire, from continuing a conversation rendered irksome to your feelings by the attachment you retain for me; but on reflection you will acknowledge that nothing could be more rational than my wish to regulate everything whilst I am still in the enjoyment of health, so as to spare my family any painful sentiment which such a measure of precaution might otherwise occasion them.

“Who knows whether a premature and sudden death may not tear me from their affections? Were even a protracted malady to afford me leisure for attending to so important an act, could I wish, when death is near at hand, to bestow my attention to so heartrending a duty? Could I command sufficient strength for it? Now, Sire, is the proper moment for drawing up my will, in order that my mind may thenceforward be at ease until the close of an existence which, thanks to your kindness, is rendered comparatively happy.

“I shall therefore lose no time in sending you the draft of that intended document, in the margin of which I request Your Majesty will condescend to

favour me with your observations or commands. Need I say how strictly I should attend to them? This would be the last signal proof of my perfect submission to your wishes, and you are well satisfied of my readiness to afford it. Nothing could be more distressing to my feelings than the reflection that my memory could ever be visited with the charge of ingratitude; but I feel confident that Your Majesty will spare me such a mortifying apprehension.

“I beseech you, Sire, not to mention this plan to my children, who would only view it under a painful aspect without dwelling upon the soothing and delightful reflection I should derive from having secured a reward for those who have given me proofs of the tenderest attachment.

“I perceive you have grounds of complaint against the King and Queen of Naples. Alas! Sire, though superior to mankind by such lofty qualities, you must be assimilated to it by those sorrows which fall to the lot of all! I must, however, be circumspect in alluding to persons whose conduct is so distressing to you at the present moment; they have given me too much cause of complaint to warrant my passing encomiums upon them to which they can lay no claim, and you are aware I have never boasted of any affected generosity. Though I have sincerely forgiven the mortification they have occasioned me, I cannot view their ingratitude towards you with the same com-

posure and indifference. I still venture to hope that your domestic peace and harmony will be restored through the powerful interference of the Empress-mother. You place too much value upon the affection of your family not to make me extremely desirous that the King and Queen should alter their mode of proceeding in your regard. I could derive no gratification from beholding any departure from their duty which would justify the opinion I had formed of them; nor would it compensate the distress I should feel at knowing that your mind was a prey to sorrow.

“I subscribe myself now, what I was fifteen years ago, your sincerest friend,

“JOSEPHINE.”

The desire expressed by the Empress to provide for the due fulfilment of her last wishes could not be carried into effect. The events which succeeded each other with such incredible rapidity called her exclusive attention to the calamities impending over France, and to the Emperor's unparalleled misfortunes.

The painful malady which closed her existence left her no leisure to provide for her friends, or give effect to the intentions which her generous heart had suggested to her.

Some months previously to her last illness, she determined to give M. Horeau a proof of her grateful

remembrance. Aware of his wish to purchase a small estate near Malmaison, she said to him in M. Corvisart's presence that she placed 60,000 francs at his disposal towards promoting the plan he had in view.

"As soon as you shall have found anything suitable to your wishes," added Josephine, "M. de Montlivault will lodge that sum in your hands. In the meanwhile, I request you will draw up notes of hand so worded as to secure the fulfilment of my promise; I shall sign them, and, whatever may come to pass, you will receive the amount of those obligations, which will afford you the surest pledge of my esteem."

M. Horeau's delicacy prompted him to decline this measure of precaution, which his knowledge of Josephine's generosity made him consider unnecessary; ere the close of the year he had to regret his error, for the Empress died, and he only received a trifling pension, which to the best of my recollection was only paid to him for a very short period of time.

Several persons attached to Her Majesty were equally disappointed. Madame d'Arberg, who had been her confidential adviser and most faithful friend, was offered *a carriage and a pair of horses*, of which she declined the acceptance.

Her unbounded attachment and uniform disinter-

estedness of conduct gave her an undoubted claim to a very different reward. After Josephine's death Madame d' Arberg was left no other consolation than that of having served her with a zeal which no circumstances had ever impaired, and which on several occasions proved of material advantage to the interests of the property devolving to Her Majesty's heirs ; thanks to the system of economy established in Josephine's household by her Lady of Honour, that property was not burdened with a single debt.

LETTER XLIV.

FROM THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE TO THE EMPEROR.

The Empress Sees the King of Rome at Bagatelle.—
Madame De Montesquiou. — The Royal Infants of France.
— His Royal Highness the Duc de Berry and Madame. —
Their Acts of Benevolence.

“MALMAISON.

“SIRE: With a mind still a prey to the emotion occasioned by yesterday’s interview with Your Majesty, engrossed with the recollection of the lovely and amiable child * you brought to see me, and penetrated with gratitude for the step you have taken in my behalf, of the possible unpleasant consequences of which in respect to yourself I am fully aware, I cannot resist the pleasure of addressing you, and again conversing on a subject of such unfeigned delight as to have left me at a loss for words to describe it at the moment of our interview. The heart, which, out of consideration for my feelings, prompted you to run a risk calculated to endanger your peace of mind,

* The Empress had gone to Bagatelle, where she was met by the Emperor and the King of Rome.

cannot fail to appreciate the eagerness of my desire to convey to Your Majesty how deeply sensible I am of the favour you have condescended to grant me.

“My anxiety to meet the King of Rome did not assuredly proceed from a mere motive of curiosity; his countenance, as portrayed in the most striking likenesses of him, had become familiar to me. I was, however, desirous of studying his physiognomy, of hearing the sound of a voice so much resembling your own, and seeing you caressing that child whose birth has crowned all your hopes; I longed, in short, to return to him all those marks of endearment which you formerly bestowed upon my Eugène. When you call to mind your warm attachment for the latter, you will not wonder at my tenderness for the child of a stranger, since you are also its parent; you will not deem those sentiments insincere or exaggerated in which, from personal experience, you can so fully participate.

“The moment you entered the apartment, leading young Napoleon by the hand, that moment was indeed one of the happiest of my life. It obscured every other, because it afforded me the most affecting proof of your regard. Your compliance with my wishes was not the effect of an ardent passion, but of a sincere esteem and attachment. My happiness is now the more complete as I am satisfied those sentiments can never undergo a change.

Marie Louise.

Photo-etching after painting by Freilhorn.



“I could not avoid shuddering at the idea of the dissolution of our marriage, being justly apprehensive at the time that a young, handsome, and highly accomplished wife would make you completely forget one who, possessing none of those advantages, would be pining away at a distance from you. The estimate I had formed of Maria Louisa’s qualities made me dread that I should soon have to discover how perfectly indifferent I had become to you ; this suspicion proved how erroneous was my conception of your lofty and generous soul, which retains so lively a remembrance of my devoted attachment, and of an enthusiastic tenderness on my part, so fully justified by those distinguished qualities on yours which excite the astonishment of Europe, command the affections of all those who surround you, and force your very enemies to do you justice.

“Yes, Sire, I am compelled to own it ; you have even surprised me, habituated as I am to admire you ; the delicacy of your conduct towards me, your assiduous endeavours to surround me with the most marked attentions, and, in short, the step which you adopted yesterday prove still more powerfully to my mind how far superior you are to the favourable idea I had formed of you.

“How great was my delight at pressing the young Prince to my heart ! how happy I felt at beholding the blooming health of his countenance ! at seeing the

satisfaction pictured in yours whilst engaged in contemplating us both ! Methought I was no stranger to this child ; and whilst he was loading me with the most endearing caresses, I quite forgot I was not his mother ! I no longer envied the fate of any other being ; mine appeared to surpass the felicity reserved for poor mortals. When compelled to quit you, to tear myself away from an infant I was so slightly acquainted with, the excess of my sorrow baffles all description.

“ You will not have failed to notice the little tone of authority assumed by your son when he insisted upon my residing with him at the Tuileries, and the displeasure marked on his countenance when I answered that it would be impossible for me to comply with his wishes. ‘ *Why not,*’ replied the child, ‘ *since papa and I insist upon it ?*’

“ This already indicates that a tone of command will be familiar to him ; so far from regretting this early indication of a disposition which in private individuals would be attended with serious inconvenience, we ought, in my opinion, to rejoice at its display in a Prince destined to reign during a period so closely bordering upon the horrors of a protracted Revolution. After a convulsion of so frightful a nature as that to which we have all been witnesses, a Sovereign cannot ensure the repose of his dominions by the mere exercise of a gentle sway over his sub-

jects. The country over whose destinies he presides, and which still retains traces of the volcano that once shook it to its centre, must be impressed with the conviction that a crime should be punished as soon as perpetrated.

“‘It is only,’ as you have so often repeated to me, ‘it is only when you shall have inspired in others the dread, not of arbitrary punishment, but of strict uncompromising justice, that you are warranted in courting their affection.’

“You have frequently availed yourself of the privilege of performing an act of grace; but you have also given proofs that you would never tolerate an infraction of laws dictated by yourself. Thus it is that you have succeeded in controlling the Jacobins, in softening the rancour of the Royalists, and in giving satisfaction to the moderate party. Your son will have your example to guide him; and, more fortunate than you, he will be enabled to exercise a greater degree of clemency towards the guilty.

“I had a conversation with him which proves that he is gifted with very tender feelings. After playing with my *charivari*, —

“‘This is very handsome,” said he, “but does it not seem to you, madame, that if you were to give it to a poor man it would make him rich?’

“‘No doubt it would.’

“‘Well, then, I saw a poor man in the wood;

shall I send for him ? I have no money, and he wants a *fine coat*.'

" 'The Emperor will have great pleasure in doing what you wish on this subject. Why does not Your Imperial Highness ask him for his purse ?'

" 'I have done so already, madame, and he gave it to me on our leaving Paris ; but you appear so good-natured I thought you would not refuse to contribute your share towards an act of kindness.'

" I promised accordingly to be of service to the poor man, and shall certainly keep my word. I have sent a message to him by one of my servants, who is to bring him to-morrow to Malmaison, when we shall see what can be done for him. I cannot but feel great delight in performing a deed of charity recommended by a child only four years of age. I request, Sire, that you will tell him that *his poor man* is no longer poor.

" I feel sure you will be pleased to hear these details of a conversation kept up in whispers, whilst you were examining an atlas at the end of the apartment. They will prove to you how fortunate it is for the King of Rome to have a governess who can inspire him with feelings of compassion which are the more to be admired as they are uncommon in Princes, who generally hear no other language than that of constant adulation, and thus acquire the right of supposing that everything is intended for their conve-

nience, and that they are not called upon to consider their fellow creatures. The virtues of Madame de Montesquiou render her worthy of the difficult and painful task you have confided to her ; and the sentiments nourished by the Prince fully establish the correctness of your choice. How could he fail to exhibit a gentle disposition, having been reared by one who is a perfect model of kindness ?

“ I fear that, notwithstanding your orders, His Imperial Highness may have spoken of this interview, which ought, however, to remain a profound secret. I cautioned him on the subject, assuring him that if my visit to Bagatelle became known it would be impossible for me ever to renew it.

“ ‘ In that case, madame, you need not be uneasy ; I shall not mention a word of it, because I am very fond of you ; only, promise that you will return to see me if I obey your wishes.’

“ I assured him that he could never long so impatiently as I should for the moment of our next meeting ; never was language more sincere.

“ Nevertheless, Sire, I am well aware that these interviews, which are to me a source of unfeigned delight, cannot be of frequent occurrence ; and I shall not prove insensible to your considerate attention by drawing too largely upon it. The sacrifice I shall make to your domestic tranquillity will afford you a fresh proof of my anxiety for your happiness ; this

idea will console me for the regret I shall experience at being debarred the satisfaction of embracing *my adopted son*. Can anything be more affecting in your sight than this exchange of children between us? For my part, Sire, I feel mortified at being deprived of doing more for your son than giving him this title, and at the necessity of checking my inclination to promote his welfare. What a contrast between this conduct and your kind treatment of my Eugène! The lapse of time only increases your disposition to serve him, and adds to the weight of obligations for which I am more and more at a loss to make a suitable return! At all events, I rely upon the Viceroy for mitigating the distress of mind which your family occasions you; if your suspicions regarding the King of Naples were, unfortunately, to be realised, you would stand more than ever in need of Eugène's assistance; and I feel confident that he will prove himself alike worthy of you by his conduct as a military man, and of me by his attachment to you.

“This letter, Sire, is written at great lengths; but I was imperceptibly led on by the pleasure of conversing on the subject of our two sons; this motive will plead my excuse for having taken up so much of your time. Our emotions of joy acquire as much expansion as those of grief are wont to shrink from observation; I can account in no other way for this

long epistle; I cannot close it, however, without renewing the assurance of my respectful gratitude.

“JOSEPHINE.”

The praises bestowed by Josephine upon young Napoleon are strictly applicable to the royal infants of France. Her Royal Highness, Mademoiselle, in her most tender years, always evinced an anxiety to solicit the pardon of any soldiers who chanced to be reprimanded or punished in her presence for breaches of discipline during her daily excursions to Bagatelle.

I have been assured that whenever she happened to see any poor persons on the road she threw money to them from the carriage window, as well as her sweetmeats and playthings, which at her age were of far greater importance to her.

This innate benevolence of disposition cannot excite our astonishment; the wonder would be, on the contrary, if the children of *Madame* and of the unfortunate Duc de Berry were to appear in other colours!

Many traits have been related to me respecting that unhappy Prince, which confirmed my previous knowledge of the generosity of his heart. The following anecdote is not generally known, and appears calculated, more than any other, to add to the regret experienced at the loss of a Prince who, whilst he protected the fine arts, was not forgetful of the unfortunate.

Beloved by his household, he took a pleasure in rewarding the good conduct of his servants. He assembled them all on a certain occasion, and, after addressing a few kind questions to several amongst them, he recommended that they should try to economise and place their money in the savings-bank.

“By this means,” said His Royal Highness, “you will secure a small independence for your more advanced age; and as I wish you to rear up your children in sentiments of attachment to us, I must contribute to the future comforts which I am desirous you should enjoy. You will therefore bring me every month what you may have had in your power to lay aside; I will add to it an equal sum, and we will immediately lodge the whole amount in the savings-bank. You must,” continued the Prince, with a smile, “carefully avoid paying too many visits to *the gates* of Paris, because those who shall lay out the whole of their wages will have nothing to expect from me.”

The Duc de Berry punctually kept his promise, and I believe that his august widow continues to give effect to this benevolent object, which is attended with the double advantage of securing a comfortable independence to old servants, and preventing the indulgence of any excess on their part which would interfere with their punctual attendance to their respective duties. The idea of such a reward is well worthy of the descendant of the *Good Henry*.

Duchesse de Berry.
Photo-etching from old print.



LETTER XLV.

FROM THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE TO THE EMPEROR.

Defection of the King of Naples. — The Empress Defends the Queen against the Charge of Being an Accomplice in Her Husband's Conduct. — Her Advice to Napoleon.

“MALMAISON.

“SIRE: I have just been informed that your worst suspicions are realised, and that the King of Naples, disregarding the ties of relationship which bind him to your cause, and the duties imposed upon him by the exalted station he owes to your bounty, has swelled the number of your enemies, and betrayed the most sacred obligations. I have, unfortunately, nothing to urge in his defence, and my heart suggests no palliative that I could offer in mitigation of the overwhelming sorrow to which you must be a prey. This will sufficiently prove to you that my own sorrow admits of no consolation. Nevertheless, I cannot consent to remain silent at such a moment, feeling apprehensive that many of your immediate attendants will aggravate your grief by exciting your animosity against the guilty cause of it. Sensible of

the extraordinary affection you bear your sisters, I fully share in your feelings, and can anticipate the violent course your well-founded anger will suggest to you, encouraged as it will be by those obsequious advisers who are prepared to obey your slightest wishes, and determined to laud all your actions with indiscriminate praise.

“You must acknowledge that I have never resisted your will, though I have sometimes presumed to contradict you by observations which were not wholly disregarded since they induced you to alter your plans, and to adopt those which a frail woman had suggested. I must continue to act a part which becomes me as much at the present day as it did at an earlier period.

“There is not a shadow of excuse for the conduct of the King of Naples; but I beseech you, Sire, not to extend your revenge to his wife by depriving her of an attachment upon which she always sets a high value, and to which she is still entitled, if, as I firmly believe to be the case, this unfortunate Princess is entirely opposed to her husband’s criminal proceedings; so far from overwhelming her with the weight of an anger she has probably not deserved at your hands, make an appeal to her heart, and prevail upon her to exert every means at her command for the purpose of preventing the King from injuring you or disgracing his own character.

“If matters have gone too far, and you are under the necessity of considering in the light of an enemy a brother who is indebted to you for the crown he is on the point of sullyng, do not discard the Queen from your affections, whenever she shall be left with no other protection to look up to ; for you have often repeated an expression, the justice of which is exemplified in every page of history, *traitors cannot succeed*. The King, who is now considered by foreign powers in the character of an ally, will be sacrificed if his downfall should be made the price of a peace with you ; if, contrary to all appearances, you should happen to be defeated, Murat would also fall a victim in the struggle. They would no longer permit the existence of a King, who would thenceforth be treated as a usurper, and they would hurl him from a throne which he endeavours to retain by the most blamable, the most injudicious conduct, and even by an act of dishonour.

“Pity your sister, Sire ; she has too much discernment not to have anticipated the dreadful futurity which threatens her. Should she ever become an unhappy wanderer, afford her shelter and protection ; and console her for her husband’s ingratitude, whilst your moderation will inspire her with the warmest affection for you.

“Should you yield to first impressions, and indulge in the melancholy satisfaction of returning evil for

evil, you will punish your innocent nephew; and sooner or later will deplore a severity which will be a source of constant regret to you. I entreat you, Sire, for your own sake maturely to reflect ere you adopt a final determination on this subject. Consult not those advisers whose suppleness yields to every impression of your mind, but take counsel from the devoted attendants about your person, from those gallant and honest companions in arms who never compromised with their conscience, and would have preferred incurring your displeasure rather than recommend a course at variance with their sense of honour. Defer to the opinion of the Empress-mother; in short, do not visit with your vengeance until you shall have acquired a conviction that there exists no claim for your forgiveness.

“Deign, Sire, to excuse the freedom of this letter. The apprehension I feel of your one day repenting an over-precipitancy in condemning has armed me with courage to incur the risk of displeasing you. The knowledge that I am performing a sacred duty has increased my resolution to speak out at this painful crisis. The sincerity and warmth of my zeal will plead my apology for presuming to offer advice; and you will confess that Josephine has not departed from her wonted candour when addressing the man who, of all others, can best appreciate the language of truth which is so seldom spoken to him.

"I expect to see Eugène to-morrow, and I beseech you, Sire, to inform him whether I have your forgiveness for writing a letter dictated by that anxiety for your welfare which predominates in my mind over every other sentiment. With a heart so open to the gentle affections of fraternal love, you would fail to promote your happiness by venting your revenge upon a sister. Condescend to yield to my advice, and preserve that friendship for me which I prize above all other gifts. "JOSEPHINE."

The Empress, as I have already observed, was not partial to the Queen of Naples; the noble generosity with which she took her part at a moment when Napoleon had so much cause to be irritated against his sister, who had not prevented her husband from betraying him, is entitled to the highest praise, and appears to me one of those instances in which her character displayed itself under the most favourable aspect.

I am wholly unacquainted with the real sentiments entertained by the Queen of Naples at the period alluded to, nor does it enter into my plan to investigate the subject. If free from guilt on the occasion, nothing can have exceeded her distress of mind. She must have bitterly deplored the ingratitude of the King her husband if her own conduct was exempt from reproach.

LETTER XLVI.

THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE TO PRINCE EUGÈNE, VICEROY OF ITALY.

A Stranger Delivers to Josephine an Autograph Letter from Général Beauharnais. — The Unknown Person Declines Accepting a Present. — Copy of the Letter. — The Prince-Primate. — Freyre, Josephine's *Valet de Chambre*. — M. Mejan, the Viceroy's Private Secretary. — Affecting Anecdote.

“MALMAISON.

“I AM this moment informed, my dearest son, of the dreadful affliction with which the Emperor has just been visited by his acquiring a certainty of the defection of the King of Naples; and feeling convinced that you will be deeply mortified at the event, I lose not a moment in writing to tender those maternal consolations to you which may operate as a sedative to your sorrow.

“You will not only deplore a revolting ingratitude so calculated to compromise the Emperor's plans in respect to his armies of Italy, of which you are one of the chief commanders, but will also regret being deprived by another's fault of some brilliant opportunities of acquiring fresh glory; and you may,

perhaps, with a view to calm the sorrows of your benefactor, attempt by yourself the task which, conjointly with the King of Naples, you had been destined to accomplish.

“I have therefore to request, my dear Eugène, that you will strictly conform to the Emperor’s orders; it is more than ever essential at this moment, when his forces are reduced by treachery and defection from his cause, that you should act with the utmost circumspection, and forbear to give way to that over-ardent zeal which might prompt you to attempt retrieving the King of Naples’s ingratitude by exceeding the strict limits of your duty. Recollect you are bound at this time to curb your inclination to perform those deeds of valour which, however calculated to raise your fame, might in their consequences, and contrary to your wishes, obstruct the success of operations emanating from the genius who presides over our destinies, and deliberately meditated in the cabinet of the Tuileries.

“The Emperor neither doubts your attachment nor your military talents; you cannot, therefore, afford him a better proof of both than by paying implicit obedience to his wishes; let him find in you, my son, what he seeks for in vain within the bosom of his own family; let him perceive that all your thoughts and actions are directed to the object of evincing the sincerity of the gratitude we owe to him. At no

time can we feel a greater desire to display it than at this moment of danger ; I am confident, therefore, that you never were more anxious to manifest your attachment.

“I am perfectly ignorant of the part taken in these events by the Queen of Naples ; should you possess any positive information on the subject, I request you will make it known to me. I have written a letter to the Emperor which is calculated to calm rather than to irritate him in respect to Caroline ; I am satisfied he suspects that he has more cause to complain of her than of her husband ; but I can hardly believe that a woman can be so accessible to the violence of ambition as to depart from those gentler duties of her nature which emanate from the heart. Until it can be proved to me that the Queen is an accomplice in the late conduct of her husband, I must persist in believing that she has exerted every means at her command to prevent his defection from the Emperor’s cause.

“Give me some details respecting the Vice-Queen, your children, and even the Prince-Primate ; the latter is so sincerely attached to you that he has won my affection ; pray acquaint him with my sentiments.

“I was forgetting to apprise you that a very ill-dressed man called a few days ago at Malmaison, and insisted so much upon speaking to me, saying he had something of importance to communicate, that I was

immediately informed of the message. Several persons represented that his external appearance rendered it unsafe for me to receive him, and that I should merely send my chamberlain to the stranger. You are aware, my dear Eugène, of my inveterate habit of never taking any one's advice on such an occasion; I accordingly insisted on conversing with the man, and received him in the small salon adjoining my private apartment. Being desirous, however, of calming the apprehensions of those who felt interested in my safety, respecting what they considered an act of *imprudence* on my part, I desired my faithful Freyre and Dargeance to remain in the antechamber; they ushered in the poor man, whose coarse apparel could not disguise his dignified countenance and his freedom of deportment as he approached me.

“He observed with becoming reserve, but without any timidity, that he did not present himself for the purpose of asking, but, on the contrary, of rendering me a service. ‘Though far,’ added he, ‘from being rich, nevertheless I am by no means an object of distress; nor do I come to solicit assistance from Your Majesty; I well know the pleasure you feel in bestowing it upon all those who are in affliction; but I repeat that I am perfectly contented with my humble lot. Aware, madame, of the respect entertained by your august son for the memory of his

estimable father, I come to request Your Majesty will be pleased to forward to him this *autograph* letter of Général Beauharnais, which fell into my hands by a concatenation of circumstances too intricate to detail to Your Majesty ; here it is.'

"Accordingly, on concluding these words, he handed me a letter which is certainly in your father's handwriting. Feeling apprehensive of confiding it to any one without your previous sanction, I content myself with sending you a copy of it, and retain the original at your disposal until you shall have informed me by what means I am to forward it to you. This is one more document to be added to those you preserve with such hallowed care ; and I think you will be delighted to possess it.

"Unwilling to wound the feelings of the stranger who had just delivered into my hands so valuable an object, I abstained from offering him any money ; but in order to compel his acceptance of a reward which might prove useful to him, I presented him with your portrait set in diamonds ; 'Ah ! madame,' said he, with tears in his eyes, 'what an erroneous opinion Your Majesty has formed of me. Condescend to give me the Prince's portrait, but without any mounting. I shall then be truly happy.'

"I was much affected at his request, and complied, to his inexpressible satisfaction. He refused to mention his name, and I was unwilling to outstep the

bounds of discretion by desiring any one to follow him. We must learn to respect the secrets of others if we are anxious that our own should never be betrayed.

“No words can convey a just idea of the emotion I experienced on beholding your father’s handwriting. Events, the most extraordinary and heartrending, happy and unfortunate, pleasing and unaccountable by turns, have occurred in such rapid succession since the date of this letter that I could hardly pronounce, when it was handed to me, whether I felt regret or otherwise at having survived it. Nevertheless, in spite of the many sorrows that have oppressed me of late, I doubt whether I should consent to forego the recollection of the last twenty years of my life. During this long period of time, you, my dearest Eugène, have always been a most affectionate son, you have exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and taught me to what height a mother’s happiness may be carried; what grounds could I then have for complaining?

“Farewell, my dear and excellent Eugène; pray let me hear from you, if you write but two lines; or if you feel at a loss for time, desire Mejan to give me news of all who are dear to me.

“I embrace you with the warmest affection,

“JOSEPHINE.”

Copy of a Letter from Général Alexandre Beauharnais, Commander of the Army of the Rhine, to the National Convention, Dated Headquarters at Landau, 20th July, 1793.

“I think it right to apprise you, citizens representatives, that I quitted the position of the heights of Menfeld during the night of yesterday, the 19th, in order to take up a position at Landau, and to attack at the same time the enemy, who had established himself in the vicinity of this place. I moved the army upon six columns, three of which were intended to effect false attacks. The chief object I had in view was to take possession of the defiles of Anweiller and the heights of Franckweiller which are in advance of those defiles, and in which the enemy had strongly entrenched himself.

“Everything has succeeded to my wishes. Général Arlandes with the 10th regiment of infantry took possession of the Gorge of Anweiller; Général Meynier, at the head of the 67th, occupied at the same time Alberwiller and the ramifications of the gorges leading to it; the advanced guard, headed by Générales Landremont, Loubat, and Delmas, drove the enemy with loss from the heights of Franckweiller, which were defended by the emigrants and the free corps of Général Wurmser.

“Général Gilot having sallied with 5,000 men of the brave garrison of Landau, which was intended to draw off the enemy’s attention towards the wood, was equally successful in that direction. The false attacks of Général Ferrière and of the brigades of Général Lafarelle and Mequillet upon several points of the lines of the Queich operated as a very useful diversion to my real attacks, by compelling them to evacuate the villages of Belheim, Kintelsheim and Ottersheim. The enemies of the Republic were repulsed with loss in every direction, and, contrary to custom, they left the ground covered with their dead and wounded. We have taken some prisoners and seized upon many redoubts, in which our soldiers found no cannon, it is true, but a supply of bread, greatcoats and ammunition.

“This event, which was so far fortunate for the troops of the Republic, as they successfully accomplished the object I had in view, promises to be attended with the most important results.

“My communications with the army of the Moselle are now established through the country of the Deux-Ponts, and the courage of the Republicans composing the army of the Rhine affords a pledge that this army will prove itself more and more worthy of the public confidence by fulfilling the engagements which its position, its strength, and the interests of an important town in a state of siege, have imposed upon

it as a duty towards the common country. I cannot as yet furnish any details respecting those partial engagements which claim the attention of the representatives of the people, and demand on the part of a free country the expression of the national gratitude; but my next letter will dwell at length upon the subject.

“I beg to tender once more the homage of the fidelity of all the Republicans composing the army of the Rhine towards the Republic, one and undivided, of their attachment to the Constitution, and of their gratitude towards the worthy legislators to whom they are indebted for its blessings.

“The General-in-chief of the Army of the Rhine,
“ALEXANDRE BEAUHARNAIS.”

Freyre was the first *valet de chambre* of the Empress, and gave her at all times the most signal proofs of his unbounded attachment. I believe him to be now employed in the household of the Princesse Eugène de Leuchtenberg; but he comes regularly to France for the purpose of attending the funeral service which is performed every year in the church of Rueil on the anniversary of Josephine's death. It is painful to find that this is, perhaps, the only servant who displays such an affecting respect for the memory of his benefactress.

I have heard from a peasant of Rueil that this

funeral service was seldom numerously attended, except by the country people in the vicinity, who make it a point to assist, and a few strangers who are attracted by the ceremony, as well as by the curiosity of seeing the monument under which are deposited Josephine's remains.

What mortal can flatter himself of leaving an imperishable regret behind him, when we find the tomb of Josephine deserted by those whose happiness she had at all times so warmly consulted !

M. Mejan, the Viceroy's private secretary, was in constant attendance upon him during his campaigns, and evinced the most assiduous attachment to the Prince until the last moment of his existence. I frequently met him at the Palace of Navarre, where he always accompanied the Prince, and contributed to the enjoyments of the social circle by his amiability of temper and his cheerful and polished wit. He once related to us the following anecdote :

He had, according to custom, followed the Viceroy to Russia. During the disastrous retreat from Moscow he lost his equipage, and found himself alone on a road strewn with dead and dying soldiers. He was beginning to feel the effects of the cold which had already performed such frightful havoc, and afforded him a presentiment of his being about to share the fate of the unfortunate beings he was at every moment leaving behind him ; he had still a

long league to walk ere he could reach a village in which he might hope for assistance, and he despaired of being able to perform the distance.

On a sudden he was startled by a faint groan. He looked round, and, perceiving an officer stretched at full length on the snow, he could not take upon himself to abandon the unfortunate man without attempting some efforts to restore him to animation. He approached, raised the hat which concealed his features, and fell on his knees, exclaiming, "My son, my son!" It was, in fact, his own son, who was on the point of death.

M. Mejan felt such a shock on recognising the being most dear to him in life, that his blood recovered a more active circulation. He tried in vain to lead forward the young man, who was exhausted with cold, want, and fatigue. Finding in his paternal tenderness that strength and courage which were wanting to him a few moments before, he placed his fond son across his shoulders and endeavoured to reach the long-wished-for village. After incredible exertions he overtook a few soldiers who assisted him, and he succeeded at last, after a most painful march, in reaching the spot. Providence completed the work he had begun; the attentions and presence of his father were the means of saving young Mejan, who was thus indebted to him a second time for his life.

Previously to being attached to the Viceroy of Italy, M. Mejan had been Chief Secretary to the Prefecture of the Seine, in which situation he rendered important services. He is brother to the editor of the *Causes Célèbres*.

LETTER XLVII.

THE EMPRESS TO M——.

Entrance of the King. — M. Anatole de la Woëstine.

“MALMAISON.

“SIR: I was yesterday furnished with the most minute details respecting the entrance of Louis XVIII. by M. Anatole de la Woëstine, who called at Malmaison and related to me the occurrences of a day so joyful to the one party, so painful to the other, so unexpected and novel to all.

“I had hoped to learn from you the particulars of that ceremony, which, from the enthusiasm displayed on the occasion, was nothing more than a copy of those to which I had already been an eye-witness! You probably could not find a leisure moment for giving me an account of it; it would now be superfluous, since I have heard everything I wished to know, and it is better no longer to advert to a subject which can only bring to my mind a distressing recollection of the past, when the same transports, the same manifestations of attachment, were displayed towards a hero who is never mentioned at this moment but in terms of reproach; who is represented

as a tyrant after having been worshipped as an idol, and who may, perhaps, hereafter be arraigned as a coward !

“ This language may appear to you exaggerated ; you are too young to have seen to what extremes the versatility of the French will hurry them ; but I have passed through our Revolution ; its victim at first, afterwards raised beyond its reach, I have acquired the conviction that our fellow countrymen are incapable of moderate ideas, and must always run into extremes. Enthusiasm for one man is now of twenty years’ standing ! they will atone for such constancy ! . . .

“ M. de la Woëstine, with a talent peculiar to himself, found means to relate to us in so ingenious a manner what could not fail to distress our feelings, that he succeeded in exciting our mirth by describing every character in the most ludicrous colours. I was just now alluding to the French levity of character ; but was wrong in criticising it, for I have my full share of that character, since I could put on a cheerful countenance at such a moment. It is very true that no one could have refrained from it, who listened to and beheld that pleasant madman mimicking all the actors in the scene he was endeavouring to represent.

“ After indulging in this vein of mirth, of which we had all caught the infection, —

“‘The die is cast,’ said he, ‘I quit France forever. I have served under a standard now about to be discarded ; I should be compelled to resign a uniform I have worn with some share of glory ; my mind can never submit to it. I shall not betray the new Sovereign, for I never will enlist in his service.’

“I endeavoured to remonstrate with him by observing that he could not give effect to his intentions, as he had no fortune to depend on.

“‘Can Your Majesty suppose,’ he replied, with great gravity of countenance, ‘that I could ever be induced by selfish motives to commit a dishonourable act ? I flatter myself you never entertained such a thought, and I shall have it in my power to prove how unmerited would be the aspersion.’

“There was an end from that moment to all further attempt at mimicking ; and I believe that M. de la Woëstine is fully determined upon fulfilling his intentions. I esteem him the more for it, though few will be found to follow his example. All will be eager to serve under the new Government, will vie with one another in anxiety to reach the hall of the Tuileries, as they had formerly done at the time of the coronation ; all will indignantly repel the bare supposition of their having ever *solicited* places which they will pretend have been reluctantly *forced* upon them !

“It is in your power to say whether, with few ex-

ceptions, the Emperor ever found it necessary to offer the places of chamberlains or pages to the proudest nobles of the old monarchy; if, on the contrary, he was not under the necessity of selecting persons from amongst the numerous rivals who were anxious to approach his person! May the King never be betrayed like Napoleon! May France enjoy at last the calm of undisturbed tranquillity! This is the warmest of my wishes, since I am no longer ambitious to see her happy under the sway of a man who had saved her from crime and anarchy.

“I find myself at this moment nearly in the same position in which I happened to be on the occasion of that famous ball which I attended a few days before the declaration of my divorce! My fate was then as uncertain as it is now; the countenances around me bore the impress of curiosity instead of indicating that benevolence I had been wont to read in them. I was no longer *looked at*; I was *closely examined*! . . . Whilst I kept up the deportment of a Sovereign, I no longer fulfilled my destiny; I was performing a part which would soon be brought to a close, and the crown I still wore had become a *mere costume*, which I was about to lay aside forever! With a heart oppressed with grief, I was compelled to put on the smile of content. The Emperor has preserved for me the title appertaining to a crowned head; but how dear was the price? . . . Is not every sensation

I then felt what I experience at the present moment? Will the diadem be torn from my brows, or be still allowed to ornament them? At any rate, I value it as nothing, since it is no longer shared with another mortal.

“I have seen very few visitors these days past, nor am I surprised at it, for a visit to the *first wife of Napoleon* would be a proof of courage which few friends would venture to manifest until they knew in what light the King might consider their conduct. When the allied Sovereigns were in the possession of absolute sway here, all continued to pay their regular court to me; their attentions, the constancy of their visits, were noticed as worthy of imitation, and calculated to prove beneficial. Everything has now assumed another aspect, and I can assure you that I am under no apprehension of being incommoded by a crowd of acquaintances; this is a relief to which I attach some importance.

“I find it necessary to reflect in the calm of retirement, upon the part which it most becomes me to adopt at the present moment; the course most consonant to my feelings will probably encounter obstacles which I must not attempt to overcome. Certain it is that I neither can, nor ought to remain, so near a Court where everything will form a perfect contrast to my ideas, my recollections, and my feelings!

“I am awaiting the commands of him who has the

greater right to expect my obedience as he is now a proscribed individual. His will alone shall guide my proceedings, and I shall deem myself not wholly unfortunate if I can assuage misfortunes far greater in their extent than the extraordinary successes which preceded them. Call on Eugène and Hortense; consult them in regard to the course I should adopt, without attempting to bias their opinions; and let me know their sentiments.

“Farewell, monsieur, do not come to see me; I fear such an act on your part might be injurious to your interests, and I have nothing so much at heart as to avoid doing any one an injury; you may write to me, however, on the subject to which I have just alluded, as well as concerning my affairs in general, assuring me at the same time of your friendship, upon which I always set the highest value.

“JOSEPHINE.”

M. de la Woëstine, whose name I have already had occasion to mention, has always displayed as much frankness in his private character as bravery on the field of battle. His conduct is no doubt open to the serious charge of turning into ridicule a class of men who had long suffered in defence of a cause which, although in opposition to the one he had espoused, was entitled to his respect; but a young man's giddiness is excusable at a moment of public agitation.

M. de la Woëstine proved true to his opinions, and accordingly renounced many advantageous prospects. His distinguished name and high rank in the service might have held out to him the prospect of a rapid promotion, and his career could not fail to have been as brilliant in France as it has become obscure at Bruxelles. He is consoled, on the other hand, by the satisfaction that his conscience is free from the reproach of having courted fortune and followed in its train, whatever forms it assumed. He was faithful to the cause of misfortune, and when deprived of the society of his relatives he has acquired friends who, although they cannot altogether make up to him for his absence from his family and native country, prove at least by their respect and attachment the sense everywhere entertained of his dignified conduct.

CONCLUSION.

Disgraceful Proposals and Letters Addressed to Me on the Subject of These Memoirs.

I HAVE now reached the close of these Memoirs which, though commenced with some degree of reluctance, were continued under more encouraging prospects, owing to the welcome reception given by the public to a work faithfully descriptive of the Empress Josephine's character, replete with anecdotes highly redounding to the credit of several distinguished personages of our own days, and, withal, perfectly free from pretensions or party spirit. I am the more delighted at the termination of the work when I reflect that I shall be relieved from anxieties and vexations beyond number, which I never could have foreseen when I undertook the task.

I could not, in fact, have suspected that any one would have condescended to solicit my suffrage, or done me the far more painful honour of dreading my attacks; neither could it occur to me that I ran the risk of being confounded with those who stoop to the degrading trade of selling their praises or their silence. Having abstained from naming myself, I

could not suppose that any one would attempt to raise the veil of incognito I had assumed for no other purpose than to escape the compliments of my friends, and to secure my family from the insults which its enemies would heap upon it. As every line of these Memoirs bears the stamp of truth, the above were the only motives that induced me to conceal my name, which I should have felt no hesitation in inserting in the title-page had I merely to apprehend the attacks of an impartial criticism to which I, no doubt, laid myself sufficiently open to justify me in hoping that no other weapons would have been resorted to. I mistrusted the partiality shewn by the public towards the person dearest to my heart, to whom I am still more attached by sentimental feelings than by the ties of relationship, and I wished to prevent that person the mortification of being involved in the aspersions which would so readily be cast upon a work calculated to excite some degree of interest; in short, I was not ambitious of a celebrity which is foreign to my taste, and still more so to my position in life. The protracted misfortunes which have embittered my existence have made it necessary for me to seek happiness in a state of repose, which I flattered myself would not be disturbed by the mere attempt on my part to consign this work to the press. The result shews that I have been sadly mistaken.

Having announced the intention of rigidly adhering to truth in my narratives, the public must have expected that I could only relate facts to which I had been an *eye-witness*, and have felt persuaded that leading as I do an obscure though independent life, void of all ambition (as the whole course of my existence can attest) and in circumstances not above mediocrity, I could never be accessible to *any offer* calculated to make me deviate from the path I had resolved to follow; any one might, therefore, have spared himself the disgrace of making a contemptible request, and have also spared me the regret that such a proposal should ever have been made.

Great were my surprise and mortification when I found myself overwhelmed with letters containing numberless *admirable traits of character* furnished by men who were bold enough to affix their signatures to narratives of their own honourable acts; they were desirous of seeing them recorded in these Memoirs, not, as they pretended, through any personal gratification they could derive from it, but out of respect for their distinguished names! Presents *and even money* were offered to me as an inducement to publish anecdotes calculated to increase their celebrity!

A feeling of indignation might have induced me to divulge the names of those who could thus suspect my sentiments to be in unison with their own low-

mindfulness ; but I abstain from taking so signal a vengeance of them. I content myself with observing in this place that *all those letters* are in my possession, and might, if I thought proper, be made public, a course I will never resort to unless the parties concerned should have the assurance of addressing to me any further epistles of that description.

With respect to those which contain reproaches and threats in reference to *real* anecdotes inserted in this work, I disdain replying to them, and I pity any person capable of wielding such weapons against a woman, who, being compelled to maintain a rigid adherence to truth, has extenuated as much as possible any facts calculated to do injury ; those very persons who wish to inspire me with a dread of the consequences of my candour are well aware that I have not told *everything*.

I have been deeply penetrated at many obliging letters in which thanks are given to me for my occasional observations respecting affectionate parents, brothers, or husbands. In penning these Memoirs I did not anticipate the gratitude of persons who had long become absolute strangers to me. I rejoice at the circumstance of my having proved to them that neither the ingratitude, injustice, nor forgetfulness of friends could effect a change in my sentiments, that I have forgotten everything with the exception of *former* acts of kindness.

Nevertheless these letters, as well as those couched in very different language, have all remained unanswered ; had I acted otherwise, I should have been forced into a correspondence with a crowd of individuals whose names were alluded to, as I must again repeat it, merely because truth and the force of circumstances imposed it as a duty upon me to do so.

No motive of personal interest, no feeling of resentment, has induced me to bestow praises, or to cast reflections upon any one ; accordingly, no thanks are due to me in the former case, and in the latter I must claim indulgence if my pen has been reluctantly compelled to record them. I must not lay it aside without expressing my gratitude to the public journals who have given an account of my first setting out in a career so successfully and creditably commenced.

I have, generally speaking, been treated with a spirit of lenity, which is calculated to afford me encouragement, though in a less degree than a kind, polished, and fair criticism ; men distinguished by their talents have not disdained to assist me with their advice, thereby shewing that they considered me not unworthy of adopting it. Should I ever undertake any other work, I trust it will not be lost upon me. To that advice I shall ascribe my successful efforts if my anticipations be not over-sanguine.

To direct the pen of a novice in the career of literature who may so far lay claim to praise as to assert

that she has never yielded to any other impressions than the dictates of a heart capable of appreciating virtuous and honourable actions, and recoiling at the bare idea of promoting the views of intrigue, insincerity and ambitions, is to place within its reach those means of success which are too often overlooked — they are no others than sincerity and good faith.

THE END.

THE SUPPER OF BEAUCAIRE.

I WAS at Beaucaire, on the last day of the fair, and happened to have for company at supper two merchants of Marseilles, an inhabitant of Nîmes, and a manufacturer of Montpellier. In the space of a few minutes, which were passed in becoming acquainted, they learned that I came from Avignon, and that I was an officer. The attention of my company, which had all the week before been fixed on the course of trade, which increases wealth, was at that moment turned to the issue of the present contest, upon which depends its preservation. They wished to know my opinion, in order that, by comparing it with their own, they might be the better enabled to form probable conjectures respecting the future, which affected us in different ways. The Marseillais, in particular, appeared to be less petulant; the evacuation of Avignon had taught them to doubt of everything, and they manifested great solicitude about their future fate. Confidence soon made us communicative, and we began a conversation nearly in the following terms :

THE NÎMOIS.

“Is Cartaux’s army strong? It is said to have sustained a heavy loss in the attack; but if it be true that it has been repulsed, why have the Marseillais evacuated Avignon?”

THE OFFICER.

“The army was four thousand strong when it attacked Avignon, and is now six thousand, and in four days more it will be ten thousand: it lost five killed and four wounded; it was not repulsed, since it made no regular attack; it hovered about the place; it strove to force the gates by attaching petards to them; it fired a few cannon-shot to try the temper of the garrison; it afterwards retired into its camp to combine its attack for the following night. The Marseillais were three thousand six hundred strong; they had a heavier and more numerous artillery, and yet they were obliged to retreat across the Durance. You are much astonished at this; but the fact is, that none but veteran troops can contend with the vicissitudes of a siege; we were masters of the Rhone, of Villeneuve, and of the country; we should have interrupted all their communications. They were obliged to evacuate the town; the cavalry pursued them in their retreat; they lost a great many prisoners, and two pieces of cannon.”

THE MARSEILLAIS.

“ We have received a different account ; I will not dispute yours, since you were present, but you must own that all that will lead to nothing ; our army is at Aix ; three good generals are come in place of the former ones ; they are raising fresh battalions at Marseilles ; we have a fresh train of artillery, including several twenty-four pounders ; in a few days we shall be in a posture to retake Avignon, or at least we shall remain masters of the Durance.”

THE OFFICER.

“ All this has been told you in order to lead you to the brink of the abyss, which is deepening every moment, and which will perhaps engulf the finest city in France, that which has deserved the most of the patriots. But you were also told that you should traverse France, that you should sway the Republic, and yet your very first steps have been checked ; you were told that Avignon could resist for a long time a force of 20,000 men, and yet a single column of the army, without a battering-train, got possession of it in twenty-four hours ; you were told that the South had risen, and yet you found yourselves alone ; you were told that the cavalry of Nîmes was about to crush the Allobroges, and yet the latter were at St. Esprit and at Villeneuve ; you were told that 4,000 Lyonnais were marching to your aid, and yet the Lyonnais

were negotiating an accommodation for themselves. Acknowledge, then, that you are deceived, see the incompetence of your directors, and distrust their calculations; self-love is the most dangerous of counsellors; you are naturally impetuous; they are leading you to your destruction by the same means which has ruined so many nations, by inflaming your vanity. You have considerable wealth and population, and their amount is exaggerated to you; you have rendered signal services to liberty, and you are reminded of them, without at the same time pointing out to you that the genius of the Republic was with you then, whereas it has now abandoned you. Your army, say you, is at Aix, with a large train of artillery and good generals; well, do what it may, I assure you that it will be beaten. You had 3,600 men, of which a full half is dispersed; Marseilles, and a few refugees from the department, may furnish you 4,000 men at the most; you will then have 5,000 or 6,000 men, without unity, without order, without discipline. You say you have good generals; as I do not know them, I cannot dispute their ability, but they will be entirely occupied in the details: their exertions will not be seconded by the subalterns; they cannot do anything to maintain the reputation which they may have acquired; for it would take two months to organise their army tolerably, and in four days Cartaux will have passed the Durance, and with what soldiers?

With the excellent light troops of the Allobroges, the old regiment of Burgundy, a good regiment of cavalry, the brave battalion of the Côte d'Or, which has been victorious in a hundred combats, and six or seven other veteran corps, encouraged by their successes on the frontiers and against your army. You have eighteen and twenty-four pounders, and you think yourselves impregnable; therein you follow the vulgar notion, but professional men will tell you, and fatal experience will shortly demonstrate to you, that good four and eight pounders are as effective in the field, and are preferable on many accounts to pieces of heavy calibre. You have cannoneers newly raised, and your adversaries have gunners from the regiments of the line, the best masters of their art in Europe. What will your army do if it concentrates itself at Aix? It is lost; it is an axiom in the military art, that the army which remains in its entrenchments is beaten; theory and experience entirely agree on this point; and the walls of Aix are not equal to the worst field-entrenchment, especially if we consider their extent, and the houses which surround them exteriorly, within pistol-shot. Be assured then, that this course, which seems to you the best, is the worst; besides, how can you supply the town in so short a time with every kind of provision which it wants? Will your army go and meet the enemy? It is less numerous, its artillery is less adapted to the field, it

would be broken and defeated without resource, for the cavalry would prevent it from rallying. Expect, then, to have the war carried into the territory of Marseilles: there a very numerous party is for the Republic, and that will be the moment for it to declare itself; the junction will be made, and that city, the centre of the commerce of the Levant, the emporium of the South of Europe, is ruined. Remember the recent example of Lisle,* and the barbarous laws of war. What infatuation has all at once possessed your people? What fatal blindness is leading them to their destruction? How can they think of resisting the entire Republic? Suppose they could oblige its army to fall back upon Avignon, can they doubt that in a few days fresh combatants would come to supply the places of the former? Will the Republic, which gives the law to Europe, receive it from Marseilles?

“United with Bourdeaux, Lyons, Montpellier, Nîmes, Grenoble, the Jura, the Eure, the Calvados, you undertook a revolution, and you had some probability of success; your instigators might be ill-intentioned, but you had an imposing mass of strength. But now that Lyons, Nîmes, Montpellier, Bourdeaux, the Jura, the Eure, Grenoble, Caen, have received the Constitution;

* Lisle, a small town of the department of Vaucluse, four leagues east of Avignon, having resisted the army of Cartaux, was taken by assault on the 26th of July, 1793.

now that Avignon, Tarascon, Arles, have submitted, — confess that there is madness in your obstinacy. It is because you are influenced by persons who, having nothing more to lose, would involve you in their ruin.

“Your army will be composed of all the wealthiest portion of your city, for the *sans-culottes* might very easily turn against you. You are going, then, to risk the flower of your young men, accustomed to hold the commercial balance of the Mediterranean, and to enrich you by their economy and their speculations, against veteran soldiers who have so often bathed their hands in the blood of the furious aristocrat, the ferocious Prussian.

“Let poor countries fight to the last extremity: the inhabitant of the Vivarais, of the Cévennes, or of Corsica, exposes himself without fear to the issue of a combat; if he is victorious, he gains his object — if he is beaten, he finds himself as before, at liberty to make peace, and in the same position. But you — lose a battle, and the fruits of a thousand years of industry, economy, and prosperity become the prey of the soldier. Such, however, are the risks which you are induced so inconsiderately to run.”

THE MARSEILLAIS.

“You get on fast, and you alarm me. I agree with you that the circumstances are critical; perhaps

it is true that the position in which we at present stand is not sufficiently considered; but you must acknowledge that we still have immense resources to oppose to you.

“You have persuaded me that we cannot resist at Aix; your observation respecting the want of provisions for a siege of long duration is perhaps unanswerable; but do you think that all Provence can long witness calmly the investment of Aix? It will rise spontaneously; and your army, hemmed in on every side, will be fortunate if it can repass the Durance.”

THE OFFICER.

“How little knowledge this displays of the spirit of men and that of the time! Everywhere there are two parties; the moment you are besieged, the Sectionary party will be put down in all the country places. The example of Tarascon, of Orgon, of Arles should convince you of this; where twenty dragoons have sufficed to reëstablish the old authorities, and put the others to the rout.

“Henceforward any great movement in your favour is impossible in your department; it might have taken place when the army was beyond the Durance, and you were unbroken. At Toulon men’s minds are much divided; and the Sectionaries have not the same superiority there as at Marseilles, so that they

must remain in the town to repress their adversaries. As for the department of the Lower Alps, you know that nearly the whole of it has accepted the Constitution."

THE MARSEILLAIS.

"We will attack Cartaux in our mountains, where his cavalry will be of no use to him."

THE OFFICER.

"As if an army protecting a town could choose the point of attack. Besides, it is not true that there are any mountains near Marseilles sufficiently impracticable to render cavalry ineffective; your olive-grounds, indeed, are sufficiently steep to render the management of artillery more difficult, and thereby give your enemies a great advantage; for it is on broken ground that, by the celerity of his movements, the exactness in serving his guns, and the accuracy of his elevations, the expert cannoneer has the greatest superiority."

THE MARSEILLAIS.

"You think, then, that we are without resources. Can it possibly be the fate of that city which resisted the Romans, and preserved a part of its laws under the despots who succeeded them, to become the prey of a few brigands? What! shall the Allobroges, laden with the spoils of Lisle, give law to Marseilles? What, shall Dubois de Crancé and Albitte reign un-

controlled? Shall those bloodthirsty men, in whose hands the calamities of the time have placed the guidance of affairs, be absolute masters? What a melancholy prospect you present to me! our property, under different pretexts, would be invaded; we should continually be made the victims of a soldiery whom plunder unites under the same banners; our best citizens would be imprisoned and would perish by violence. The Club would again lift its monstrous head to execute its infernal projects! Nothing can be worse than this horrible idea; it is better to leave ourselves a chance of victory, than to become victims without any alternative."

THE OFFICER.

"Such is civil war: men go on in mutual defamation, abhorrence, and slaughter, without knowing one another. The Allobroges — what do you think they are? Africans? inhabitants of Siberia? Not at all: they are your fellow countrymen; Provençaux, Dauphinois, Savoyards. You think them barbarous because their name is strange. If your phalanx were called the Phocæan phalanx, people would give credit to every species of fable respecting it.

"It is true that you have reminded me of one fact, the case of Lisle. I do not justify it, but I will explain it. The people of Lisle killed the trumpeter who was sent to them; they resisted without hope of

success ; their town was taken by assault ; the soldiers entered it amidst fire and slaughter, it was not possible to restrain them ; and indignation did the rest.

“ Those soldiers whom you call brigands are our best troops, and most disciplined battalions ; their reputation is above calumny.

“ Dubois-Crancé and Albitte, constant friends of the people, have never deviated from the straight line ; they are villains in the eyes of the bad. But Condorcet, Brissot, Barbaroux, were also villains while they were consistent ; it will always be the lot of the good to be spoken ill of by the bad. You think they show you no mercy, and yet they are treating you like wayward children. Do you think that if they had chosen to detain it, the Marseillais could have withdrawn the merchandise which they had at Beaucaire ; they could have sequestered it until the issue of the war ; they did not wish to do so ; and you owe it to them that you can return quietly to your homes.

“ You call Cartaux an assassin ; but know, that that General takes the greatest care to preserve order and discipline ; witness his conduct at St. Esprit and at Avignon, where not a pin’s worth was taken. He imprisoned a serjeant who ventured to seize the person of a Marseillais of your army who had remained in one of the houses, because he had violated the asylum of a citizen without an express order. Some people of Avignon were punished for pointing out a

house as aristocratical. One soldier is under prosecution on a charge of theft. Your army, on the contrary, has killed, assassinated, more than thirty persons, has violated the retreats of families, and filled the prisons with citizens on the vague pretext that they were robbers.

“Do not be afraid of the army; it esteems Marseilles, because it knows that no town has made so many sacrifices to the common weal; you have eighteen thousand men on the frontier; you have not spared yourselves on any occasion. Throw off the yoke of the few aristocrats who govern you, return to sounder principles, and you will have no truer friend than the soldier.”

THE MARSEILLAIS.

“Ah! you soldiers have greatly degenerated from the army of 1789; that army would not take up arms against the nation; yours should imitate so noble an example, and not turn their arms against their fellow citizens.”

THE OFFICER.

“Had those principles been followed, La Vendée would ere now have planted the white flag on the walls of the reërected Bastille, and the camp of Jalès would have been ruling at Marseilles.”

THE MARSEILLAIS.

“La Vendée desires a king, a counter-revolution;

the war of La Vendée, of the camp of Jalès is that of fanaticism; ours, on the contrary, is that of true republicanism, friends of the laws and of order, enemies of anarchy and of bad men. Have we not the tri-coloured flag? And what interest should we have in wishing to be slaves?"

THE OFFICER.

"I am well aware that the people of Marseilles differ widely from those of La Vendée with respect to a counter-revolution. The appetite of the people of La Vendée is strong and healthy; that of the people of Marseilles weak and sickly; the pill must be sugared in order to make them swallow it, to establish the new doctrine among them they must be deceived, but in the course of four years of revolution, in such a number of stratagems, plots, and conspiracies, all the perversity of human nature has been developed under different aspects, and men have perfected their natural subtlety; so true is this, that in spite of the departmental coalition, in spite of the ability of the leaders, and the numerous resources of all the enemies of the Revolution, the people everywhere awoke at the moment they were thought to be spellbound.

"You say you have the tri-coloured flag; Paoli also hoisted it in Corsica to have time to deceive the people, to crush the true friends of liberty, to lead

his fellow countrymen to concur in his ambitious and criminal projects; he hoisted the tri-coloured flag, and yet he fired upon the vessels of the Republic, and he drove our troops from the fortresses, and he disarmed those which remained there, and he assembled forces to expel those which were in the island, and he plundered the magazines, selling at a low price all their contents to get money to carry on his revolt, and he ravaged and confiscated the property of the wealthiest families because they were attached to the unity of the Republic, and he got himself appointed generalissimo, and he declared all those who should remain in our army enemies to their country; he had previously caused the failure of the Sardinian expedition, and yet he had the shamelessness to call himself the friend of France and a good Republican, and yet he deceived the Convention, which passed its decree of deprivation; in short, he acted in such a manner that when at length he was unmasked by his own letters found at Calvi, it was too late,—the enemy's fleets already intercepted all our communications.

“We must no longer rely upon words; we must examine actions; and you must acknowledge that in estimating yours, it is easy to show that you are counter-revolutionists. What effect has the movement which you have made produced on the Republic? You have brought it to the brink of ruin;

you have retarded the operations of our armies. I know not whether you are paid by the Spaniard and the Austrian; but certainly they could not desire more powerful diversions. What more could you do if you were so paid? Your success has been an object of solicitude to all the known aristocrats; you have placed declared aristocrats at the head of your sections and of your armies, as one Latourette, formerly a colonel, one Soumise, formerly a lieutenant-colonel of Engineers, who abandoned their corps at the breaking out of the war that they might not fight for the liberty of nations; your battalions are full of such men, and your cause would not be theirs if it were that of the Republic."

THE MARSEILLAIS.

"But Brissot, Barbaroux, Condorcet, Buzot, Vergniaux, are they too aristocrats? Who founded the Republic? who overthrew the tyrant? who supported their country at the perilous period of the last campaign?"

THE OFFICER.

"I will not examine whether those men who had deserved well of the nation on many occasions did really conspire against it; it is sufficient for me to know that the Mountain, through public or through party spirit, having proceeded to the last extremities against them, having denounced, imprisoned, and, if

you will have it so, calumniated them, the Brissotins were lost, unless a civil war should enable them to give the law to their enemies. It was then to them that your war was really useful; had they merited their former reputation, they would have laid down their arms on beholding the Constitution, they would have sacrificed their interests to the public good; but it is easier to cite the example of Decius than to imitate him; they have now become guilty of the greatest of all crimes,—they have by their conduct justified their denouncement; the blood which they have caused to flow has effaced the real services they had rendered.”

THE MANUFACTURER OF MONTPELLIER.

“You have considered the question in the point of view most favourable to those gentlemen; for it seems to be proved that the Brissotins were really guilty; but guilty or not, the days are gone by when men fought for personal interests. England shed torrents of blood for the families of York and Lancaster, France for those of Lorraine and Bourbon; but do *we* live in those times of barbarism?”

THE NÎMOIS.

“So we abandoned the Marseillais as soon as we perceived that they wished for the counter-revolution, and that they fought in private quarrels. The mask fell when they refused to publish the Constitution,

and we then pardoned some irregularities in the Mountain. We forgot Rabaud and his Jeremiads in contemplating the infant Republic, surrounded by the most monstrous of coalitions, threatening to stifle it in its cradle — in contemplating the joy of the aristocrats and the armed hostility of Europe.”

THE MARSEILLAIS.

“You meanly abandoned us after inciting us by ephemeral deputations.”

THE NÎMOIS.

“We were sincere, but you were double-dealing; we desired the Republic; we could not but accept a Republican Constitution. You were dissatisfied with the Mountain, and with the 31st of May; you then should also have accepted the Constitution in order to get rid of it, and terminate its mission.”

THE MARSEILLAIS.

“We too wish for the Republic, but we wish our Constitution to be formed by representatives free in their operations; we wish for liberty, but we wish to receive it from representatives whom we esteem, we do not wish that our Constitution should protect plunder and anarchy. Our first condition is, that there shall be no Clubs, none of those frequent primary assemblies, that property shall be respected.”

THE MANUFACTURER OF MONTPELLIER.

“It is clear to every reflecting person that a part of Marseilles is for the counter-revolution: they profess to wish for the Republic, but this is only a curtain which they would every day render more transparent, until they accustomed you to contemplate the counter-revolution undisguised; the veil which covers it is already but a flimsy one; your people are well disposed, but in time the mass of them would be perverted but for the genius of the Revolution which watches over them.

“Our troops have deserved well of their country for having taken up arms against you with so much energy; it was not their duty to imitate the army of 1789, since you are not the nation. The centre of unity is the Convention; that is the true sovereign, especially when the people are divided.

“You have overturned every law, every decent form. By what right did you cashier your department? Had it been formed at Marseilles? By what right does the battalion of your town traverse the districts? By what right did your National Guards pretend to enter Avignon? The district of that town was the first constituted body since the department was dissolved. By what right did you presume to enter the territory of the Drôme? And why do you suppose that department has no right to call upon the public force to defend it? You have then con-

founded all rights; you have established anarchy; and since you pretend to justify your operations by the right of force, you are brigands, anarchists.

“You have set up a popular government, appointed by Marseilles alone; it is contrary to every law; it cannot be other than a tribunal of blood, since it is the tribunal of a faction; you have by force subjected to that tribunal the whole of your department. And by what right? You do then usurp that authority with which you unjustly reproach Paris. Your Committee of the Sections has recognised affiliations. Here then is a coalition similar to that of the Clubs against which you exclaim; your Committee has exercised acts of administration over certain communes of the Var; this is a breach of the territorial division.

“At Avignon you have imprisoned without mandate, decree, or requisition from the administrative bodies; you have violated the retreats of families, infringed the liberty of individuals; you have in the public places murdered in cold blood; you have revived with aggravated horror the scenes which afflicted the early days of the Revolution; without examination, without trial, without other knowledge of the victims than from the designation of their enemies, you have seized them, torn them from their children, dragged them through the streets, and sabred them to death: you have sacrificed in this manner as many as thirty; you have dragged the statue of liberty

through the mire ; you have made a public execution of it, and have subjected it to every kind of insult from licentious youths ; you have mangled it with swords ; you cannot deny it ; it was noonday ; more than two hundred of your party were present at this criminal profanation ; the procession passed through several streets to the Place de l'Horloge, etc., etc. I must interrupt my reflections and my indignation. And is it thus that you wish for the Republic ? You have retarded the march of our armies, by stopping the convoys. How can we resist the evidence of so many facts ? or how call you other than enemies of your country ? ”

THE OFFICER.

“ There is the clearest evidence that the Marseillais have hindered the operations of our armies, and sought the destruction of liberty ; but the question before us now is, whether they have anything to hope, and what course remains for them to pursue.”

THE MARSEILLAIS.

“ We have fewer resources than I thought ; but there is great strength in being resolved to die ; and we will rather do so than again receive the yoke of the men who governed the State ; you know that a drowning man catches at every twig, and rather than suffer ourselves to be massacred, we will — Yes, we have all taken part in this new Revolution, and

we should all be sacrificed to revenge. Two months ago they had conspired to murder four thousand of our best citizens; judge then to what excesses they would proceed now. We have not forgotten that monster, who was nevertheless one of the heads of the Club; he had a citizen hung on the lamp-post (*lanterne*), plundered his house, and violated his wife, after making her drink a glass of her husband's blood."

THE OFFICER.

"How horrid!—but is that story true? I doubt it, for you know that nobody believes in violation nowadays."

THE MARSEILLAIS.

"Yes, rather than submit to such men we will go to the last extremity—we will give ourselves to the enemy; we will call in the Spaniards. There is no people whose character is less congenial with our own; there is no one more hateful to us. Judge, then, by the sacrifice which we make, of the wickedness of the men whom we fear."

THE OFFICER.

"Give yourselves to the Spaniards!—we will not give you time."

THE MARSEILLAIS.

"They are seen every day before our ports."

THE NÎMOIS.

“That threat alone is sufficient for me to decide which is for the Republic, the Mountain, or the Federals. The Mountain was at one moment the weakest, and the commotion appeared general. Yet did it ever talk of calling in the enemy? Do you not know that the war between the patriots and the despots of Europe is a war unto death? If then you hope for assistance from the latter, your readers must have good reasons to expect their favour. But I have still too good an opinion of your people to believe that the majority of them would go with you in the execution of so base a project.”

THE OFFICER.

“Do you think that you would thereby do a great injury to the Republic, and that your threat is really alarming? Let us weigh it. The Spaniards have no troops wherewith to effect a landing, and their vessels cannot enter your port. If you were to call in the Spaniards, it might be useful to those who govern you, in saving themselves and part of their property; but the indignation would be general throughout the Republic; in less than a week you would have sixty thousand men at your gates, the Spaniards would carry off from Marseilles whatever they could, and enough would still be left to enrich the conquerors.

"If the Spaniards had thirty or forty thousand men on board their fleet, all ready to disembark, your threat would be alarming; but as matters are, it is only ridiculous; it would only hasten your destruction."

THE MANUFACTURER OF MONTPELLIER.

"If you were capable of so base an act, not one stone ought to be left upon another in your superb city. In a month from this time, it should appear to the traveller passing over its ruins as if it had been destroyed for a century."

THE OFFICER.

"Marseillais, take my advice; throw off the yoke of the small number of bad men who would lead you to a counter-revolution; restore your constituted authorities; accept the Constitution; liberate the Representatives, let them go to Paris and intercede for you. You have been misled; it is not unusual for the people to be so by a few conspirators and intriguers; in all ages the pliancy and ignorance of the multitude have been the cause of most civil wars."

THE MARSEILLAIS.

"Ah! Sir, who can do any good to Marseilles? Can the refugees who arrive on all sides from the department? They are interested in acting with desperation. Can they who govern us? are not they in the same situation? Can the people? One part of

them does not know its position ; it is rendered blind and fanatical : the other part is disarmed, suspected, humbled. With profound affliction then I contemplate irremediable calamities."

THE OFFICER.

"You are at last brought to reason: why should not a like revolution be effected in the minds of a great number of your fellow citizens, who are deceived and sincere? Then Albitte, who cannot but wish to spare French blood, will send to you some honest and able men; an understanding will be come to, and, without a moment's delay, the army will be marched off to the neighbourhood of Perpignan to humble the pride of the Spaniard, which a little success has elevated, and Marseilles will still be the centre of gravity to liberty; it will only be necessary to tear a few pages from its history."

This happy prognostication put us all in good humour; the Marseillais very readily paid for a few bottles of Champagne, which dissipated all our cares and anxieties. We went to bed at two in the morning, having agreed to meet again at breakfast, where the Marseillais had many more doubts to propose, and I had many interesting truths to acquaint him with.

July 29, 1793.

THE END.

